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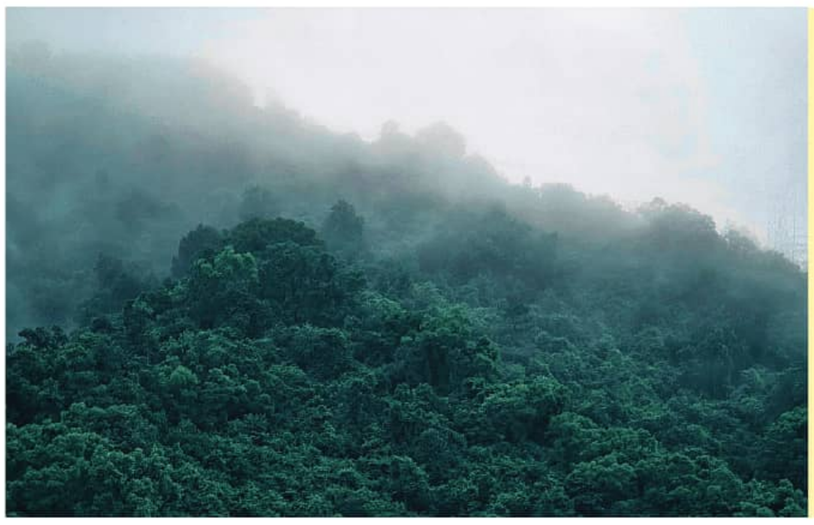
Bangalore Mirror ON SUNDAY

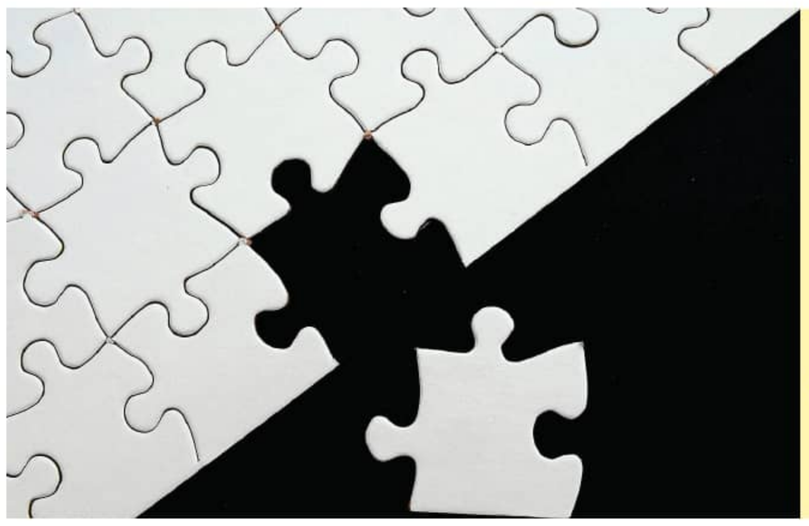
TEMP Max 24 | Min 21 | Humidity 82% Partly Cloudy Sensex 80,426 | Nifty 24,654 | Gold 1,13,766 | Silver 1,42,147 | Dollar 88.69 | Euro 103.68 | GBP 119.35



CANOPY CACHE

Environmentalists caution spike in area under very dense forest in state over last decade may be masking spread of plantations

PAGE 6



MISSING PIECES

During January–July 2025, city records 652 missing children — 482 girls and 170 boys of which 220 girls, 63 boys remain untraced

PAGE 7

On an average 714 mobile phones were stolen on a daily basis in city this year, but only 17% of them were recovered. Police say sometimes buyers have no clue about the devices being stolen goods

THIS PHONE IS UNREACHABLE

Target: Crowded spaces, poorly-lit areas, people walking with phones in their hands

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In the past 269 days, the city has seen an average of 714 mobile phones stolen every day adding up to 20,000 to 22,000 cases each month, but only 17% have been recovered despite technology being used to track them. Meanwhile, genuine mobile buyers are falling victim to scams, highlighting the growing risks in the mobile market.

According to police data, the Central Equipment Identity Register (CEIR) portal reveals that out of 1,79,285 mobile theft complaints filed until September 8, but only 30,420 devices have been traced and handed back to their owners at a recovery rate of just about 17%.

Though using the CEIR portal has traced nearly 84,942 mobile

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 »

“Most phones that are taken are locked, and we need to flash them to get the IMEI number. Only after this, can the phones be tracked. This process slows down identification

—Police official

Champs stumped by lack of govt support

2 women wheelchair tennis players have bagged various honours, but they have had to come up without much support and lack financial backing even today

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No hurdles can stop these sportswomen from Karnataka. Champion wheelchair tennis players Prathima Rao, 42, from Basaveshwaranagar in the city and Shilpa KP 38, from Mandya, have made their mark both nationally and internationally. They have won medals for India and achieved top rankings, but when it comes to support and recognition from the government, they are at a loss.

Prathima and Shilpa have been consistently proving their talent at the international level through their performances in ITF (International Tennis Federation) tournaments. Both compete in the Open Category of wheelchair tennis, and their dedication has earned them ITF recognition and global ranking eligibility.

Shilpa contracted polio when she was just two years old. After completing her pre-university education, she moved to Bengaluru with a dream: to live independently and succeed in tennis. She started playing professionally in 2019 without a coach, sponsors, or proper equipment.

CONTINUED ON PAGE 10 »

THINGS TO DO

01 Rabies shots for pets, strays

To mark World Rabies Day on September 28, a free rabies vaccination is being organised by CJ Memorial Trust (with FIAPO & Cubbon Park Canines) in association with the Department of Animal Husbandry and Veterinary Science (AHVS) Bangalore Urban district. The event aims to protect both stray and pet dogs from rabies and raise awareness about the importance of timely regular vaccination. **Where: Cubbon Dog Park; When: September 28, 10–12 am**

02 Kalaburagi strokes

Rangoli Metro Art Center and Drishya Belaku Sanskrutika Samsthe, Kalaburagi are organising 'Kalaburagi Kala Darshana', a group exhibition of paintings curated by Dr. Parashuram P, Visual Artist & Art Writer, Kalaburagi. The exhibition features the works of 58 artists from Kalaburagi district with over 150+ artworks created in diverse mediums. **Where: Rangoli Metro Art Gallery, MG Road; When: Open to public till October 6; 11 am – 6 pm**

03 Pre-wedding bash

SOCIAL is bringing the Fake Sangeet of PT Sir & English Ma'am to life in Bengaluru. It claims to be a quirky community-first celebration, to reimagine the viral trend as a high-energy mash-up of an Indian wedding sangeet and a global fan meet. **Where: JP Nagara SOCIAL; When: September 28, 4 pm – 6 pm**

04 See the pattern

National Gallery of Modern Art along with The Naturalist school will host 'Patterns in Nature', a presentation by Karthikeyan S followed by an iterative activity on the theme. **Where: The auditorium, National Gallery of Modern Art, Palace Road When: Oct 4, 10.30 am – 12.30 pm**

05 Dandiya beats

Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru is organising Lights of Joy – Dandiya Nights. The music will be a mix of beats of Bollywood with rhythm of dandiya, creating an evening filled with music, dance, and merriment. This year, the tradition is infused with glamour, transforming the dance floor into a dazzling tapestry of colours, beats, and laughter. **Where: Bhartiya Mall of Bengaluru, Bhartiya City, Thanisandra Main Road; When: September 30 and October 1; 6 pm onwards**

Melting pot of cultures, city wears all colours easily

It is that time of the year when every community in Bengaluru is going all out with festivities and their own unique rituals of celebrations

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The festive spirit of Dasara has swept across Bengaluru, with unique traditions adding vibrant hues to the celebrations. One such tradition is the age-old practice of arranging dolls, which began this year the day after Mahalaya Amavasya and will continue until October 1.

Many households have been curating dazzling Navaratri displays for decades, featuring dolls made of clay, paper-mâché, wood, plastic, POP, cotton, and brass. From Ram Navami and Shivaratri at Kailasa to Vaikuntha Ekadashi, Sankranti fairs, Krishna Janmashtami, and the grandeur of Mysore Dasara, these collections beautifully reflect India's diverse festive heritage.

This year, Navaratri, traditionally celebrated for nine days, extends to 10 days and culminates with Vijayadashami on the eleventh day. Adding to the city's festive canvas, BARSHA Bengali Association is unveiling its 10th Year Durga Puja in 2025. Renowned as one of Bengaluru's most celebrated Pujas with over 3 lakh visitors across five days, BARSHA promises a landmark celebration with the theme Chitragana, inspired by Yakshagana and India's storytelling heritage. The pandal will blend Bengal's Chhau masks, Patachitra murals, and Karnataka's Dollu Kunitha and Yakshagana artistry along with visual elements from Kantara to create a unique cultural fusion. The Maa Durga idol, arriving from Kumartuli and crafted by award-winning artist Goutam Sen, will be the centerpiece of the festivities, complemented by dhunuchi naach, sindoor khela, food stalls, cultural performances, and shopping bazaars.

Meanwhile, Punjabi Sabha continues its tradition with the 19th Consecutive Mata Di Chowki, an evening of soulful bhajans by JD Sufi & troupe, prayers, and community bonding. The event will conclude with Mahaprasad and will also support noble causes such as funding the education and medical needs of 11 girl children (Kanjaks), sponsoring eye surgeries through Narayana Nethralaya, and aiding underprivileged students with school fees.

The Bihari community's Siddhartha Sanskritik Samiti (Rajendra Babu Memorial Trust) is also organising the 47th Dashahara Mahotsav – 2025, up to October 2 at Palace Grounds. The festival includes daily poojas, Maha Saptami, Maha Ashtami, and Maha Navami rituals, with priests brought specially from the Vishwanath temple in Banaras for the last 17 years. It will conclude on Vijay Dashami with Jayanti Grahan, Pushpanjali, Visarjan, and a grand procession.

Together, these celebrations highlight how different communities across Bengaluru, be it Bengali, Punjabi, or Bihari, are stepping forward to preserve their traditions, share their cultural richness, and create inclusive spaces of devotion, joy, and community spirit during this festive season.

JC Nagar Dasara Enters 112th Year with Grand Festivities

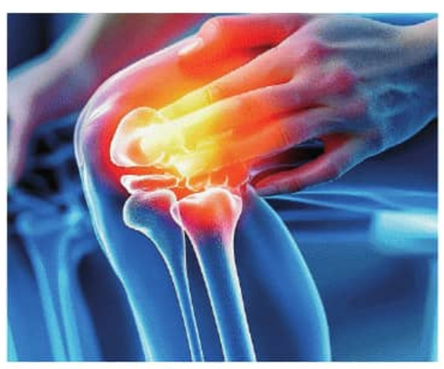
Bengaluru's JC Nagar has once again come alive with Dasara celebrations, marking an unbroken tradition of 112 years. For those unable to travel to Mysuru, the city offers its own grandeur with religious rituals, cultural activities, and community participation. The festivities began this week and will continue with devotion and vibrancy through Navaratri. On Vijayadashami, a grand procession featuring decorated floral palanquins from surrounding villages will converge behind the TV Tower before marching through JC Nagar's main streets. Daily gatherings see thousands in attendance, swelling to over a lakh on the final day. The festival features homes adorned with dolls, streets decorated with lights, and special prayers to local deities, beginning with Maheshwaramma, the presiding goddess established during the Mysuru royal era. The highlight remains the evening car procession, where palanquins and chariots carrying village deities create a spectacle of devotion and pageantry.

72-year-old kidney donor undergoes bilateral knee replacement without NSAIDs

Manipal Hospitals, Varthur Road, performed bilateral total knee replacement (TKR) on a 72-year-old woman with a history of kidney donation. The patient had advanced osteoarthritis in both knees, causing severe pain and limited mobility.

Dr. Dinesh Manni evaluated the patient and recommended TKR. Postoperative pain management was challenging due to her single kidney, which contraindicated the use of NSAIDs. The patient requested both knees be replaced in a single surgery. The operation was performed on June 7, 2025, with local cocktail infiltration and a multimodal pain management approach. NSAIDs were avoided.

Continuous epidural infusion, oral Tramadol, and a transdermal opioid patch were used to manage pain safely. The patient recovered quickly and was able to walk independently within a week. She was discharged in stable condition and has resumed normal activities. Dr.



Manni said, "This case shows that bilateral knee replacement with safe pain management is possible even in patients with a single kidney. Careful planning and coordination can lead to good outcomes in complex medical situations." **— BMB**

Survey snags: Teachers struggle with house mapping

Teachers engaged in the state's ongoing socio-educational survey are raising concerns over the difficulty of locating geo-tagged houses using only location data. The Karnataka Primary School Teachers' Association has pointed out that many enumerators have been assigned more than 75 houses spread across multiple villages, making it nearly impossible to complete the survey within the stipulated time. "How can one person manage houses scattered across four villages and still finish on time?" the association questioned in its appeal.

In a petition submitted to the Backward Classes Commission, teachers demanded that survey forms include complete house addresses, not just geo-tags. They also urged that Block Level Officers (BLOs), who are teachers, be given either voter list revision work or survey duties—but not both. The association further requested exemptions for teachers over 55, those with disabilities, or suffering from chronic illnesses, arguing that without such measures, the survey process would remain mired in logistical challenges and undue stress on staff. **— BMB**

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City youth join hands to drive climate action movement

Schools and colleges join forces through Climate Action Clubs, empowering students to lead sustainability initiatives in water, waste, energy, and greening

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From composting waste to hosting eco-festivals, students across Bengaluru are steering real-world climate solutions, creating momentum that blends education, activism, and collaboration in the fight for a greener future

The Bengaluru Climate Action Club is a youth-driven initiative that unites schools and colleges across the city to actively address climate challenges. Since its launch in June, the program has grown rapidly, with over 700 institutions registered and more than 140 active clubs already in operation. By fostering education and engagement, the initiative equips young changemakers to lead meaningful, community-focused environmental actions.

The clubs are already reshaping the way young people approach climate responsibility. Students conduct literacy drives, manage green audits, design waste and energy management projects, and run community campaigns. Monthly challenges and inter-school hackathons add momentum, blending awareness with practical action.

Explaining the structured rollout, Jeevitha Shanmuganand, Data Innovation Fellow at the Greater Bangalore Authority (GBA), said the initiative had followed a clear timeline since June. That month marked the beginning of a city-wide youth movement for sustainability. In July, 45 educators were trained through orientation sessions, where they were introduced to the program's digital portal, guidance materials, and resource kits. Baseline assessments and structured audits were launched across four focus areas—Water, Waste, Energy, and Greening. August saw momentum shift to students, with audit recognitions, certifications, eco-festival workshops, poster campaigns, and cluster activities. By September, the program expanded with Collective Climate Action Projects, mock parliaments, waste-to-craft competitions, and water conservation skits. Each month, the Bengaluru Climate Action Cell circulates a calendar of activities. But the ownership of design and execution rests with students. "Initiatives such as composting school waste or organising eco-festivals during Ganesha Chaturthi are conceptualised and driven entirely by students," Shanmuganand said. "Through this, they take on leadership roles, assume responsibility for outcomes, and proudly identify themselves as Climate Champions."

The clubs align their efforts with Bengaluru's Climate Action Plan, focusing on four critical sectors. School-level activities range from the Switch-off Challenge to reduce unnecessary electricity use, to leak check hunts targeting water wastage. Eco-festivals promote sustainable celebrations, while creative campaigns—from poster-making to skits—bring environmental issues into the cultural mainstream. Cluster-level initiatives include nature immersions at Sankey Tank and Pourakarmika Day at Swachha Graha Kalika Kendra, honouring sanitation workers and their role in urban sustainability.

Three partner organisations—CMCA India, the Climate Educators Network, and Thicket Tales—have been pivotal in sustaining momentum. They design activities in line with sustainability goals, conduct cluster events, and mentor schools. World Resources Institute (WRI) India acts as a knowledge partner, contributing to frameworks, facilitating collaborations, and monitoring progress across schools.

Looking ahead, the Bengaluru Makkala Climate Action Sabhe 2025 will take centre stage on October 28. The event will bring together schools with active clubs for a city-wide debate competition on climate action, amplifying student voices and placing young leaders firmly at the heart of the city's climate journey.

At its core, the initiative reflects a shift in how Bengaluru views climate change—no longer as a challenge left to governments and experts, but as a shared responsibility that begins in classrooms, thrives in neighbourhoods, and is carried forward by the city's youth.

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Garbage overflow

Padmanabhanagar

Solid waste spilling onto roads in Ex-PM's locality, Ward 182, has been ignored by civic authorities for over six months.

Pothole peril

Iblur

The Iblur-Gate 1 stretch from Manipal Hospital to Silk board is broken and pockmarked with potholes, endangering commuters, especially two-wheelers.

Residents battle BBMP neglect over blocked Mangammanapalya arterial road

Despite court orders and directives, officials delay action as corruption and confusion allow private claims to choke public access.

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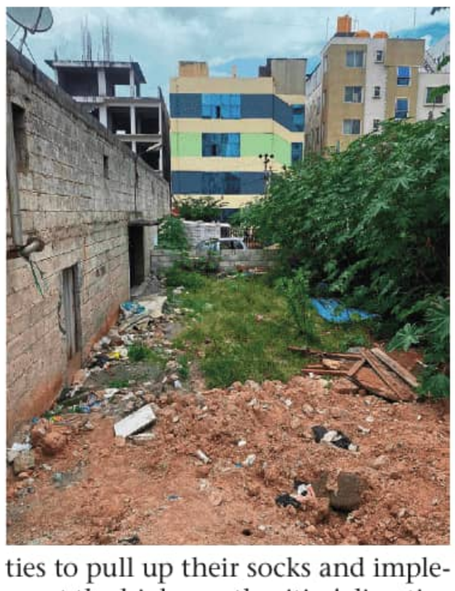
Residents of Muni Reddy Layout at Mangammanapalya have been facing a lot of problems due to the negligence and apathy of the Bruhat Bengaluru Mahanagara Palike (BBMP) authorities (now Bengaluru South City Corporation) for more than a year. They have been appealing to the authorities to restore the road that was blocked by private people claiming it as a residential site.

Bangalore Mirror published a story – How did the roadway turn into private property? – on August 22, 2022, highlighting how BBMP revenue department officials had demonstrated that even a public road, existing for over 40 years, was not safe from being falsely converted into private property by corrupt revenue officers in Bommanahalli Zone. Later, on November 11, 2024, the paper carried another report – Hurdles on the road – narrating how construction material still lay uncleared on the road in GarvebhaviPalya, Hongasandra, making it evident that there was little coordination between BBMP engineers and revenue inspectors.

Residents have demanded that officials follow both court directions and the Joint Commissioner's order to restore the road by clearing all obstacles. "I have been residing here for more than eight years. We had no issues till last year when some private people blocked the road, claiming it was their property. With the closure of this arterial road, we are facing many difficulties. I want the authorities to pull up their socks and implement the higher authorities' directive to restore the road," said Dr Gurudutt AV, a resident.



Citizens allege fake documents and B khata enabled road closure, demanding immediate action from Bengaluru South City Corporation officials

Business owners are also struggling due to the blockade. Wilson EA, a ceramic tiles dealer, explained that the closure has affected his work. "The road has existed for many years. I do not know how authorities allowed private people to close it by constructing walls and dumping debris. It has become very tough to load or unload tiles. The cross roads are narrow, and goods vehicles entering them will cause traffic jams. The authorities should not succumb to pressure and must restore the road," he said. Another resident, requesting anonymity, blamed rampant corruption. "The then BBMP authorities issued a B Khata for this road as if it was a residential site. All the documents, including sale deeds, mention the road, but the officials didn't bother to visit the spot or verify records. This negligence allowed private people to claim it. Higher authorities, including the Commissioner and Joint Commissioner, must act tough against those responsible," the resident said.

When contacted, a Bengaluru South City Corporation Assistant Executive Engineer stated he had attempted to clear the hurdles but chose to wait for legal opinion. However, documents accessed by Bangalore Mirror show that on September 16, 2025, the same official wrote to the Bengaluru Metropolitan Task Force Additional Director General of Police seeking protection to clear the road on September 18. This contradiction has left residents questioning the silence that followed. "Why did he first seek police protection to act, but then suddenly go quiet after September 18?" asked one resident.

For now, the blocked road continues to symbolise official apathy, bureaucratic confusion, and unchecked corruption, leaving residents of MuniReddy Layout to struggle with daily disruptions.

COPS TOLD TO STEER CLEAR OF CIVIL DISPUTES

Top cop issues circular reminding officers that they must direct complaints of civil nature to courts

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Director General and Inspector General of Police (DG & IGP) Dr. MA Saleem has issued a stern circular reminding police officers across Karnataka not to interfere in civil disputes.

The notice comes in the wake of repeated directions from the High Court of Karnataka, which has held that matters of civil rights, including property ownership, possession, and related issues, are strictly within the jurisdiction of civil courts and not the police.

In his circular, Dr. Saleem underlined that police officers have no authority to demand documents, adjudicate rights, or mediate in property disputes. Citing the High Court's order in AN Vasanth Madhava Rao vs. State of Karnataka (2023), the circular noted that civil disputes such as breach of contract, landlord–tenant issues, worship rights, or ownership of immovable property should not be entertained by police stations.

Police officers attend a programme in Mysuru in this file photo

The DGP directed that if a complaint is found to be of civil nature, it must be entered in the station diary, and the complainant should be advised to approach the civil court.

Only when criminal elements are apparent, such as threat, assault, forgery, or cheating, can the police register a case, and even then, it must follow procedures laid down by the Supreme Court in the Lalita Kumari judgment on preliminary inquiries.

The circular also allows police intervention only in situations where civil disputes escalate into law-and-order issues.

In such cases, officers may use preventive powers to disperse crowds, arrest offenders, or provide protection strictly as per court orders.

Be warned

The notice also issued a clear warning that if any officer, "despite knowing the complaint is purely civil in nature, tries to help or mediate in such matters," it will amount to criminal misconduct and dereliction of duty. Such officials would face departmental inquiry and strict disciplinary action.

Senior police leadership has repeatedly cautioned officers against involvement in civil disputes, calling it a major source of corruption within the department. The latest circular reinforces earlier instructions and emphasizes transparency and accountability.

"The police can act in civil cases only on the directions of courts, and not otherwise," the circular stressed, directing officers to strictly comply with the High Court's instructions and avoid overstepping their jurisdiction.

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What is pushing vehicle owners' panic buttons?

Mandatory device requirements making some look outside for fitness certificates

The state government has made it mandatory for yellow-board commercial vehicles to install Vehicle Location Tracking Devices (VLTD) and emergency panic buttons, prompting owners to seek FC (Fitness Certificate) renewals outside the state.

The transport department is refusing to renew FCs for vehicles lacking these devices, imposing fines up to ₹5,000 for non-compliance. To avoid penalties, many vehicle owners—including taxi maxi cabs, tempo travelers, private buses, and national permit goods carriers—are paying around ₹800 at regional transport offices (RTOs) in neighbouring states like Andhra Pradesh for FC renewals.

Around 4.5 lakh commercial vehicles in the state, including public service vehicles and national permit cargo carriers, are required to install VLTD and panic buttons to ensure passenger safety, including women and children.

The government had issued the mandate in November 2023, with a compliance deadline set for November 30, 2024.

New vehicles are installed with these devices at the showroom before registration. However, so far, only around 1.5 lakh vehicles have complied, leaving the majority facing fines and delayed FC renewals.

The cost of installation is significant, with 12 government-approved agencies charging between ₹13,000 and ₹16,000 per vehicle, plus an annual ₹5,500 fee for SIM card renewal, bringing the total cost up to ₹20,000 per vehicle. Owners cite the high expense as a major reason for delaying installation and are now turning to out-of-state RTOs where the maximum cost for similar installations is only around ₹6,000.

However, the state does not recognise devices installed outside its jurisdiction, forcing vehicle owners to travel to neighbouring states to renew their FCs legally.

Karnataka's dense forest surge hides plantations, warn ecologists

Government data shows 155% growth in very dense forests, but experts caution gains may reflect plantations, not genuine ecological recovery

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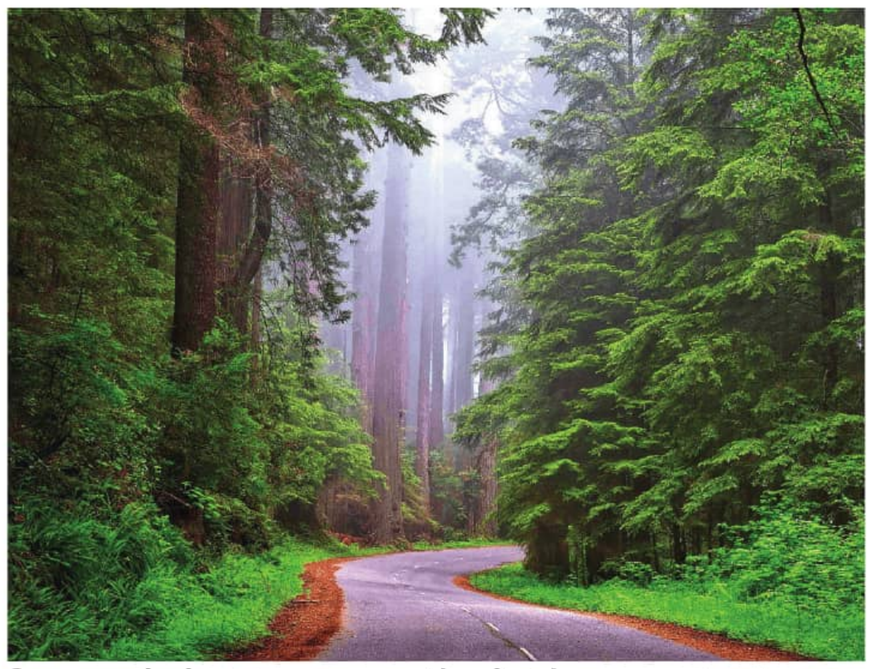

Conservationists stress canopy density alone cannot capture forest health, calling for measures that value diversity, resilience, and ecological balance and long-term sustainability

A new forest accounting report hails Karnataka's rise in dense cover, yet ecologists stress plantations inflate figures, masking biodiversity loss, fragmentation, and declining natural ecosystems that satellite imagery alone cannot reveal

Area under very dense forest in Karnataka has witnessed a tremendous surge over the last decade, a report by the Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation has highlighted.

The report, titled Environmental Accounting on Forest, the first dedicated publication on forest accounting in India, shows that in 2010-11, dense forest cover in Karnataka spread across 1,777 square kilometres. By 2021-22, the figure had gone up to 4,537.79 sq km, marking an increase of 155.36 percent. Officials attribute this to the addition of 2,713 sq km from moderately dense forest during the 2017 assessment period.

The moderately dense forest cover in Karnataka has also grown modestly. In 2010-11, it stood at 20,179 sq km, while by 2021-22, it rose to 21,151.75 sq km, an increase of 4.82 percent. Scrub areas have expanded as well, recording a net gain of 40.33 percent over the observed period. However, the state's Recorded Forest Area has remained constant at 38,284 sq km, covering 19.96 percent of Karnataka's geographical area. Categories of reserved, protected, and unclassed forests have remained unchanged during this time.

While these numbers project an optimistic trend, several ecologists and researchers have questioned the interpretation. Experts argue that the statistics may be technically correct but fail to distinguish between natural forests and plantations. This, they say, risks giving a misleading impression of Karnataka's ecological health.

According to Dr TV Ramachandra of the Centre for Ecological Sciences at the Indian Institute of Science, the apparent surge in dense forest cover is largely due to the inclusion of plantation areas. "Our study shows Karnataka has recorded a drop of more than 40 percent in its total forest cover since 1973. The only explanation for the reported increase is that plantations were not excluded. A decline is also evident from the reduction in regulatory services over time," he said.

Wildlife conservationist Giridhar Kulkarni echoed similar concerns. He pointed out that canopy density, which is the main basis for such reports, cannot alone reflect the true ecological condition of forests. "A forest may appear dense in satellite images but could still be a monoculture plantation, fragmented, or lacking biodiversity. True ecological integrity requires species diversity, structural richness, landscape connectivity, and healthy soils. Without these, numbers alone are misleading," he said.

Researchers further highlighted that the same report acknowledges fragmentation. The proportion of large forest patches, those over 10,000 sq km, has dropped by more than 13 percent, signalling that natural habitats are breaking into smaller, less resilient pieces.

At the national level, the report found that India's forest cover increased by 22.75 percent between 2010-11 and 2021-22. Very dense forests grew by 22.75 percent, while open forests and scrub registered smaller increases of 3.22 percent and 5.41 percent respectively. However, moderately dense forests declined by 3.47 percent, raising concern as experts recommend maintaining this category to ensure ecological balance.

Environmentalists caution that celebrating dense forest growth without clarifying its composition risks overlooking biodiversity loss, habitat degradation, and the weakening of ecological services. They stress that forest policy and public discourse must adopt a more holistic approach—valuing diversity, resilience, and integrity over statistics that may look encouraging but do not capture the ground reality. They argue that a plantation-heavy model, while adding green cover, often strips away local biodiversity, disrupts soil quality, and undermines traditional forest-dependent communities. Experts emphasise that meaningful conservation requires transparency in reporting, ground-level ecological assessments, and recognition of forests as living ecosystems rather than mere numbers on a graph.

Diversion of Sharavathi forest project challenged

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A wildlife conservationist from Karnataka has petitioned the Forest Advisory Committee (FAC) of the Ministry of Environment, Forest and Climate Change (MoEF&CC) to reject the proposed Sharavathi Pumped Storage Project in Shivamogga and Uttara Kannada districts.

The petitioner, Giridhar Kulkarni, argues that the 2000 MW project violates provisions of the Wildlife (Protection) Act, 1972. He points out that while the project has already received approvals from the state forest department, the State Board for Wildlife, and the National Board for Wildlife (NBWL), the process has bypassed mandatory legal safeguards.

Kulkarni highlights that the Standing Committee of NBWL granted in-principle clearance without seeking advice from the National Tiger Conservation Authority (NTCA), despite the project's alignment falling within a critical tiger corridor linking Kali Tiger Reserve with Sharavathi Valley Lion-Tailed Macaque Wildlife Sanctuary. According to Section 38-O(1)(g) of the Act, NTCA's recommendation is a mandatory prerequisite for any diversion of forest land in tiger corridors, making this omission a contravention of law.

The petition further underscores that the Detailed Project Report (DPR) has not been uploaded on PARIVESH, violating MoEF&CC's 2017 transparency guidelines. Concerns also include potential ecological damage to the UNESCO-recognized Sharavathi Valley Sanctuary, where 13,756 trees may be felled, leading to canopy fragmentation and habitat loss for endangered species.

The proposal involves diversion of 42.51 hectares of forest and 60.53 hectares of non-forest land within the sanctuary, plus an additional 11.64 hectares of forest and 28.07 hectares of non-forest land in its Eco-Sensitive Zone.

Kulkarni has urged FAC to reject the diversion, warning that proceeding without NTCA's advice would amount to wilful disregard of statutory mandate.

SSLC students anxious as pass marks decision delayed

Despite releasing exam timetable, government has not clarified pass marks, leaving nearly eight lakh students and parents stressed and uncertain

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Repeated appeals from management associations stress that releasing exam timetable without clarity on pass marks has created anxiety among students and families across the state

With SSLC exams set for March 18–April 1, confusion prevails as Karnataka government delays final order on pass marks. Parents and associations urge immediate clarity to reduce student anxiety

Even though the Karnataka School Examination and Assessment Board (KSEAB) has released the provisional timetable for the SSLC annual examinations, the government has yet to finalize the minimum pass marks, leaving lakhs of students anxious. The annual exams will be conducted from March 18 to April 1, with nearly 8 lakh students expected to appear.

In July, the state government had proposed reducing the pass marks from 35 to 33 and invited objections from stakeholders. However, despite the objection period ending months ago, no final order has been issued. Parents and students say this prolonged uncertainty has created unnecessary stress. Many feel that if the government had clarified the minimum pass marks while releasing the timetable, students could have studied without constant worry. They fear that a last-minute decision will only create further confusion and panic among students.

At present, schools under the central curriculum consider 33 marks as the minimum passing score. Parent associations and private schools have urged the state government to adopt the same standard, pointing out that thousands of students who fail by just one or two marks could pass if the benchmark is reduced. Responding to these concerns, the government proposed lowering the pass mark to 33, but the final decision remains pending.

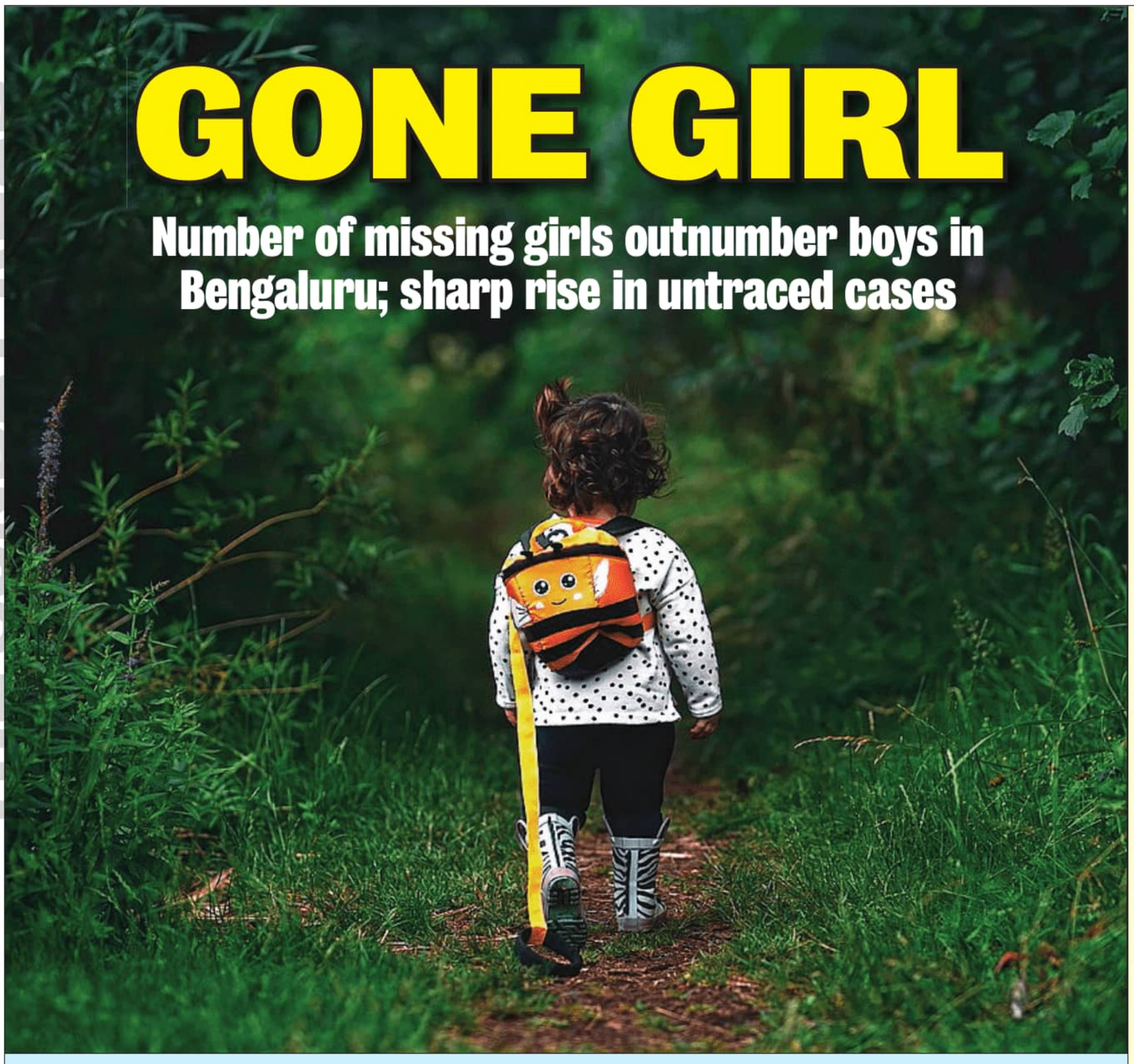
The Karnataka Private Primary and Secondary School Managements' Association (KAMS) has also written to the education minister urging an immediate announcement. "Releasing the timetable without clarifying pass marks is not the right approach. Parents and students are anxious and lack clarity. The government must announce its decision immediately," said D Shashikumar, General Secretary of KAMS.

Parent Associations too have expressed disappointment at the Education Department's delay. "We have repeatedly met officials requesting a clear order on minimum pass marks, but no attention has been paid. This negligence is causing anxiety among thousands of families," said BN Yogananda, President of the Federation of Karnataka Private School and College Parent Associations.

THE SUNDAY READ

GONE GIRL

Number of missing girls outnumber boys in Bengaluru; sharp rise in untraced cases



| Sridhar.Vivan
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Bengaluru's missing-children crisis has a distinct and disturbing gender bias: Girls are reported missing far more often than boys, and an escalating share of them are never traced.

Official data tabled in the Legislative Council recently shows that in January–July 2025 the city recorded 652 missing children — 482 girls and 170 boys. Of these, 369 were traced (262 girls, 107 boys) while 283 remain untraced (220 girls, 63 boys) — a tracing rate of just 56.6% and an untraced rate of 43.4% for the period. In 2024 the city reported 1,166 missing children (819 girls, 347 boys); since 2020 girls have consistently outnumbered boys by a wide margin.

The actual horror is in the trend. Bengaluru had only 12 untraced children out of 631 reported missing in 2020 — about 1.9%. By July 2025, the percentage of untraced cases in the city has ballooned: untraced girls rose from 20 in 2023 to 59 in 2024 and to 220 in just the first seven months of 2025; untraced boys rose from 12 (2023) to 25 (2024) and 63 (Jan–July 2025). The speed of this climb — particularly among girls — turns a worrying trend into an emergency.

Kidnappings nearly double in 4 years

This is not confined to Bengaluru. Karnataka recorded 1,558 child-kidnapping cases in 2020, which rose to 2,117 in 2021 (≈36% year-on-year jump), 2,574 in 2022 (≈22% on 2021), 3,038 in 2023 (≈18% on 2022) and peaked at 3,421 in 2024 — a roughly 120% increase from 2020 to 2024. Between 2020 and July 2025, the state logged 14,878 kidnapped children; 13,542 (≈90.95%) were traced and reunited, leaving 1,336 untraced. Girls account for the lion's share: 10,792 girls versus 4,086 boys in the five-year span. In January–July 2025 the state recorded 2,170 cases; 1,318 were traced and 852 remain unaccounted for (≈39.2% untraced).

What the Police say

Officials point to Supreme Court-mandated steps (Horilal v. Commissioner of Police, Delhi, Nov 14, 2022): Immediate FIRs, public alerts with parental consent, display of photos at transit hubs, lookout notices, inter-district alerts, checking passport applications at RPOs, special search teams, reviews of unidentified bodies, and anti-trafficking units with trained child-welfare officers. Police recovery figures show increasing rescues — 1,506 (2020), 2,053 (2021), 2,500 (2022), 2,952 (2023), 3,213 (2024) and 1,318 till July 2025 — yet the sharp rise in untraced children in Bengaluru exposes critical execution gaps. Home Minister Dr G Parameshwara insists FIRs and searches are being prioritised: "Swift action is the only way to save lives. Every case is treated on priority."

Aggregate recovery rates (≈91% across the state) mask a brutal local reality: in Bengaluru, almost half of missing children reported in the first seven months of 2025 were not found. The disproportionate rise in untraced girls suggests targeted vulnerabilities — trafficking, online grooming, transit-hub abductions, or systemic lapses in early response. Time matters: experts warn that chances of safe recovery plummet after the first 48 hours, yet the city's growing untraced ratio indicates delays, weak surveillance at bus/rail hubs, and patchy follow-up at community level.

Child-rights groups and civic experts demand an urgent, multi-pronged response: dedicated rapid-response teams for missing-child alerts, massive CCTV and human monitoring upgrade at transit hubs, stronger cyber-investigation units to trace online enticement, activation of women and child protection committees at the neighbourhood level, mandatory public dashboards with case-by-case timelines, and independent audits of police follow-up. They also say that parents need to be educated about online risks, schools must teach safety skills, and local bodies must be held to account based on tracing and rescue.

Experts warn that chances of safe recovery plummet after the first 48 hours, yet the city's growing untraced ratio indicates delays, weak surveillance at bus/rail hubs, and patchy follow-up at community level

Nobody is up for a short metro ride

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Data shows half of Bengaluru Metro's commuters travel between 8 and 25 km, while both shorter and longer distances attract fewer passengers. Pricing, time taken, and convenience play a major role in shaping travel choices. A recent analysis of Bengaluru Metro commuter data reveals that nearly 50% of riders travel between 8 km and 25 km, making it the most popular journey range. In comparison, only 1% of users travel under 2 km, and just 3% travel over 30 km. The figures suggest that the metro is most attractive for medium-distance commuters, while both very short and very long trips face challenges of cost and convenience.

A traffic expert explained why this was so. "Short-distance riders, especially those traveling 0–8 km, make up less than 20% of total users. The reasons are clear: an 8 km metro journey costs 40, with an additional 30 parking fee for two-wheelers. Factor in the time required—25 to 30 minutes including buying a token, security checks, and train waiting times—and many commuters find autos or personal vehicles faster and cheaper. Even when trains run at intervals of 10–15 minutes during off-peak hours, short rides do not seem worth the cost or effort, leading most short-distance travelers to depend on two-wheelers or autos."

At the other end of the spectrum, long-distance travel above 30 km accounts for only 3% of ridership. While metro services significantly reduce travel time compared to road traffic, the fare structure (50 to 90 for 30 km trips) does not translate into large financial savings. For many, the cost advantage over private vehicles is negligible, which limits adoption despite the time saved.

Sweet Spot: 8 to 25 km

The data highlights the metro's sweet spot: journeys between 8 and 25 km. For example, 16% of passengers travel 8–10 km, 18% travel 10–15 km, and 15% travel 15–20 km, while 14% travel 20–25 km. This mid-range travel offers a balance between cost, time efficiency, and relief from traffic congestion, making it the most viable segment for metro commuters.

The numbers suggest that metro fares and service frequency strongly influence commuter behaviour. Short trips appear too expensive relative to time taken, while long trips fail to provide meaningful cost savings despite faster travel. Unless fares are rationalised or last-mile connectivity is improved, the metro may continue to lose potential riders at both ends of the travel spectrum.

Seats installed as Yellow Line Metro learns from commuter woes

After repeated complaints from passengers, Bengaluru Metro Rail Corporation Limited (BMRCL) has installed seating at several Yellow Line stations, including BTM Layout, Jayadeva Hospital, Ragigudda, and Konappana Agrahara. When the RV Road–Bommasandra line opened, limited train sets forced commuters to wait up to 25 minutes between services, and the lack of benches caused particular hardship for the elderly. Now, each platform has metal seating for around 35 passengers, offering much-needed relief during waiting times.
Currently, the line operates four trains, with a frequency of 19 minutes. With an additional train from Titagarh in West Bengal expected shortly, services will improve to one train every 15 minutes. Once the planned fleet of seven trains is fully deployed, commuters can expect a train every 10 minutes or less, aligning the Yellow Line with the standards of Bengaluru's other metro corridors and easing the city's growing transit demand.

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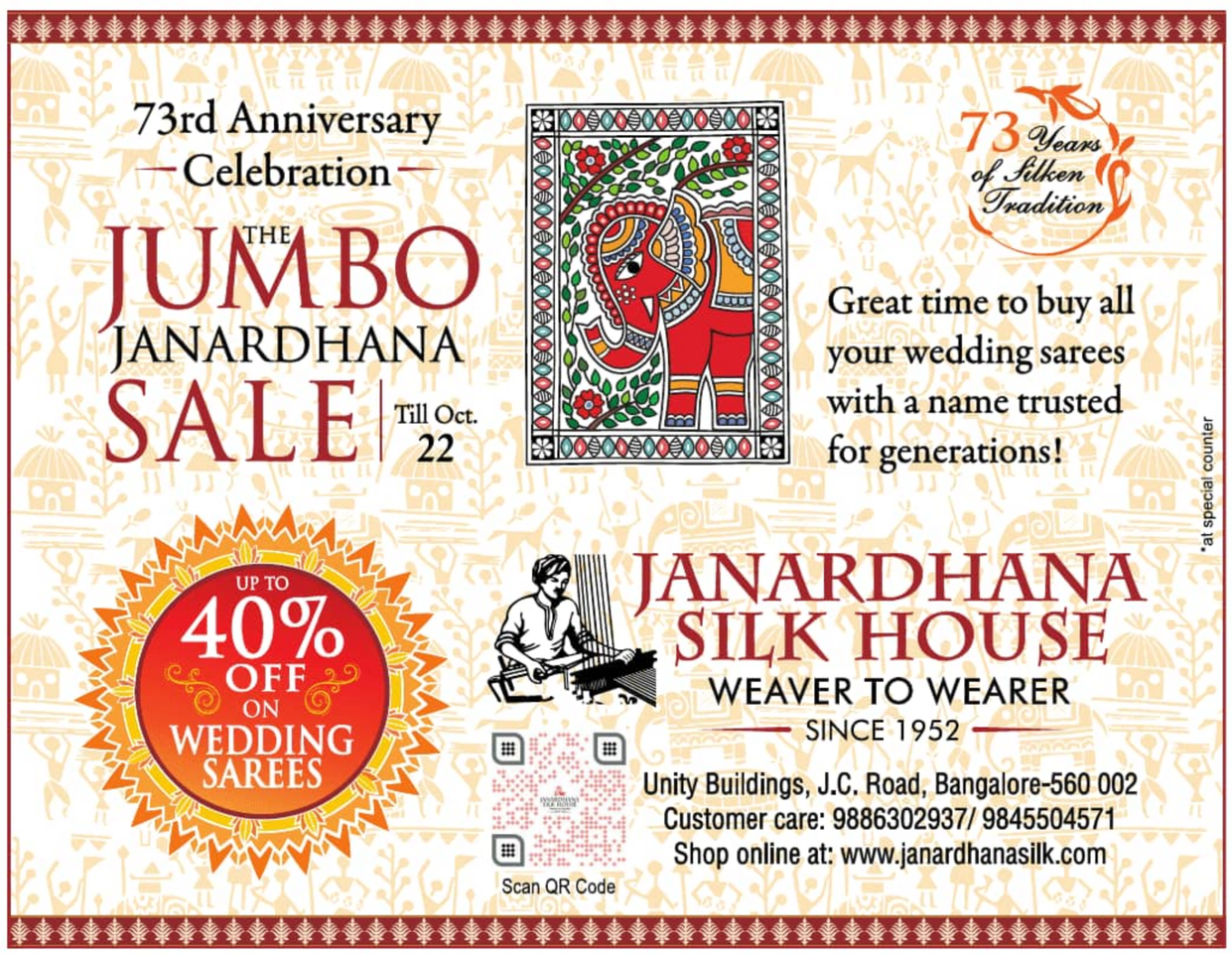
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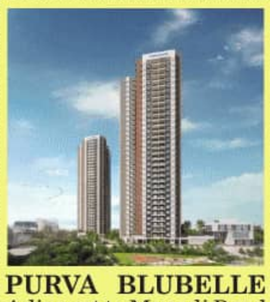

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'Provide sponsorships before tournaments, not after'

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"A sports wheelchair can cost up to Rs 4.5 lakh. I had no money, no personal vehicle to travel to tournaments, and no one to guide me. I taught myself through YouTube videos and practiced with friends on Sundays," she said.

Shilpa became the first Indian woman in the top 100 of world wheelchair tennis rankings and India's number one in singles and doubles. She has won a bronze at the BNP Paribas World Team Cup, doubles gold at Sri Lanka Open ITF Futures, was a runner-up in Turkey, and bagged a national gold, representing India in 59 tournaments.

"For me, tennis is not just about medals. It gives me confidence, therapy, and a place in society where people like me are often ignored. But despite all my wins, financial support has been a constant battle," she said.

Prathima Rao's journey is equally inspiring. She contracted polio at the age of three, that left her right leg affected and required her to use a caliper to walk. But her love for sports never faded. What started as recreational play soon turned into a professional pursuit.

Prathima has played over 20 international tournaments across Asia and beyond, winning four international titles and more than 30 national championships. Ranked 109 in singles and 98 in doubles globally, and second nationally, she has also earned bronze at the BNP Paribas World Team Cup (2024–2025) and in Kazakhstan 2025.

"I want to inspire every woman and every differently-abled athlete

to believe that dreams have no limits. My ultimate goal is to represent India at the Paralympics and Asian Games," Prathima said.

Both athletes are now preparing to represent India in upcoming tournaments in Chinese Taipei, Brazil, and Sri Lanka later this year.

The Karnataka Wheelchair Tennis Association has been giving them the opportunities to participate in national tournaments, but they still face significant challenges due to a lack of government support.

Prathima said, "Unfortunately, there were no proper sponsors when I started. I managed to participate in two ITF international tournaments every year through personal loans and support from a few references who believed in me. I strongly feel that the government and other stakeholders should provide proper funds and sponsorships before tournaments, not after. This would help cover expenses in time, ensure better equipment, and allow players like me to plan future tournaments more effectively."

Shilpa pointed out that since there were no sponsors when she started, the journey was challenging. "With proper sponsorship, better equipment, and support systems in place, players can perform at a much higher level. Government and private stakeholders need to step in to ensure timely financial assistance, access to good training facilities, and recognition, so that athletes can plan for future tournaments and focus on excelling in their sport. One of the major challenges is the lack of job opportunities and consistent financial support for para-athletes. The government should provide secure employment options, better recognition, sponsorship for future tournaments, and timely awards for achievements. These steps would encourage more participation at international levels like the Paralympics and help athletes focus fully on training and competing."

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jobs

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I, NAGARAJ, Residing at Flat 1005, 5J Block, Provident Sunworth, Venkatapura Village, Bengaluru – 560060, have changed my name to NAGARAJ RATHOD, vide affidavit dated 27/09/2025, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

business

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personal

CHANGE OF NAME

I, Humera Shoukat W/o V.S.Shoukat Ali R/o No.31, 29th Cross,7th Block Jayanagar, Bengaluru-560070 have changed my name to S.T.Humera Banu for all purposes

I, ADITI MISHRA, W/o. Ankur Khatri, R/at No. A 608, Aspen Prestige, St. Johns Woods, Taverkere Main Road, Bengaluru-560029, have changed my name to ADITI KHATRI, vide affidavit dt:27.09.2025 before Notary Onkarappa. N.R. Bengaluru.

I, PRAKASH, Residing at 75, 4th Crs, Basaveshwara Lyt, RR Nagar, Bengaluru – 560098, have changed my name to PRAKASH MALLANNA CHOUDRI, vide affidavit dated 12/09/2025. sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, MANISH KUMAR TATER, Residing at SF302, Sri Rama Arcade, Sri Rama Road, Thyagarajanagar, Bengaluru – 560070, have changed my name to MANESH U, vide affidavit dated 02/09/2025, sworn before notary Venkataraju H G, Bangalore.

I, Sharada Bhat, son of Sri.Narayan Bhat, aged about 48 years, residing at No.1413, Ground Floor, 12th 'B' Cross, 6th Main, West of Chord Road, 2nd Stage, Mahalakshmipuram, Bengaluru-560066 do hereby solemnly state that I have changed my name from Sharada Narayana Bhat to Sharada Bhat vide affidavit dated 26/09/2025 sworn before Notary Aruna V Bengaluru

I, Joshi Rajaram Digambar S/o Digambar Joshi R/o #34 Near VKS Society Gawane Goa-403506 have changed my name to Rajaram Joshi.

I, Amanullah Sardar S/o Janab sardar Saheb R/o #15,Slaughter House F street Shivajinagar B'lore-560051 have changed my name to Amanulla.

I, Muhammed Abbas Shahwar Baig R/o 39,2nd Main Road Ramachandra Puram B'lore-560021 have changed my name to Muhammed Abbas.

I, KAREEM (Old Name) resident of Market Road, Tamil Colony, Chikmagalur- 577101 have changed my name to KALEEM (New Name) vide affidavit dated: 26/9/2025 before Notary H.S. Sakalesh Aradhya Bangalore.

I Nagaraj Mohan Kumar S/O, Mohan Kumar Mitta Narashmiah R/o #1297/3 25th Main Road 9th Block Jayanagar Bangalore 560069 have changed my name to Nagaraja Mohan Kumar.

LOST & FOUND

LOST: I, Esther Chandy daughter of Sri. late Joseph Chandy, have lost original sale deed of the property bearing No.314, Nidus Apartments Drafadila Layout, Bangalore-70, document no.7987/2000-01, dt: 14.02.2000 and registered at Bommanahalli sub registrar office, Bangalore, which was not available at the time of regn in April 2019 and for which Certified Copy was obtained by the seller at that time. Regarding this i have given a police complaint (1824086/2025) dt: 27.09.2025, Finder pls contact: 9902771934 or Handover to the nearest police station.

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CM sets 1-month deadline to make roads pothole free

Following backlash over poor infrastructure in the City, CM Siddaramaiah visited various areas on Saturday to get a first hand experience. During his first inspection spot at Windsor Manor Circle on Ballari Road, CM Siddaramaiah was informed by officials that water was stagnating due to the absence of proper drainage. The CM instructed BBMP officials to ensure that water flows smoothly into the drains and does not accumulate on the road. He also directed that ongoing road works at Windsor Manor Circle be completed by the next night.

At a site along Ring Road, the CM noticed solid waste dumped near old buildings in areas lacking CCTV coverage. He instructed his vehicle driver to stop and inspected the site. CM Siddaramaiah

ordered officials to identify those responsible for dumping waste, seize their vehicles, and file cases against them. Addressing BBMP, BDA, and traffic police officials, he sharply questioned, "Do you move around with your eyes closed? Can't you see the waste on the road?" and demanded immediate action.

At Hennur Flyover, the CM observed waste dumped during building construction, where plants had grown to head height over years of accumulated debris. Angered, he asked how such old waste remained unattended and gave strict instructions to clear it within 24 hours.

CM Siddaramaiah noticed that solid waste from Ward 23 collection centers had spilled outside, even though adequate space was available inside the centers. He instructed notices to be issued to the B-Smile Chief Engineer Prahlad and another engineer, Raghavendra Prasad, responsible for waste and loose stones on the road.

Inspecting Hennur-Bagalur Road, the CM was informed that white-topping contractors had failed to maintain the roads, leaving potholes unaddressed. **BMB**

Accused often skip town to evade tracking

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

phones, when police officials hunt for it on the ground, only 30,420 mobiles have been recovered. A senior police official explained to BM, "Most phones that are taken are locked, and we need to flash them to get the IMEI number. Only after this, can the phones be tracked. This process slows down identification and often takes a lot of time, that's the first problem.

Even if we trace the phones, the accused frequently relocate and sell them, at times across different cities. Some purchasers are genuine buyers who discover later, after police recoveries, that the phones which are stolen are sold to them; a portion of these buyers lodge complaints claiming they were cheated, while others do not."

Of the recovered phones, 29,821 have been successfully returned to their owners. This shows that the process of returning recovered devices is highly efficient, with nearly 98% of recovered phones being reunited with their rightful owners.

Recently, a mobile phone snatching incident was reported in Rajajinagar, when two men on a scooter targeted a youth, who was walking while looking at his phone. The thieves swiftly grabbed the device from his hands and fled the scene. Acting on the complaint, police tracked down the accused and succeeded in arresting them. The stolen phone has since been recovered.

In another case, the RMC Yard Police busted a major mobile theft racket, arresting four men and seizing 70 stolen phones, including 44 iPhones worth ₹43 lakh. The probe began after a theft complaint in Malleswaram and led to arrests in Soladevanahalli, Goraguntepalya, and Bhadravati.

The accused confessed to stealing hundreds of phones at fairs and buses, reselling them in Chennai, or dismantling them for parts. All four were remanded to judicial custody, while efforts continue to trace victims and nab absconding suspects.

Hotspots

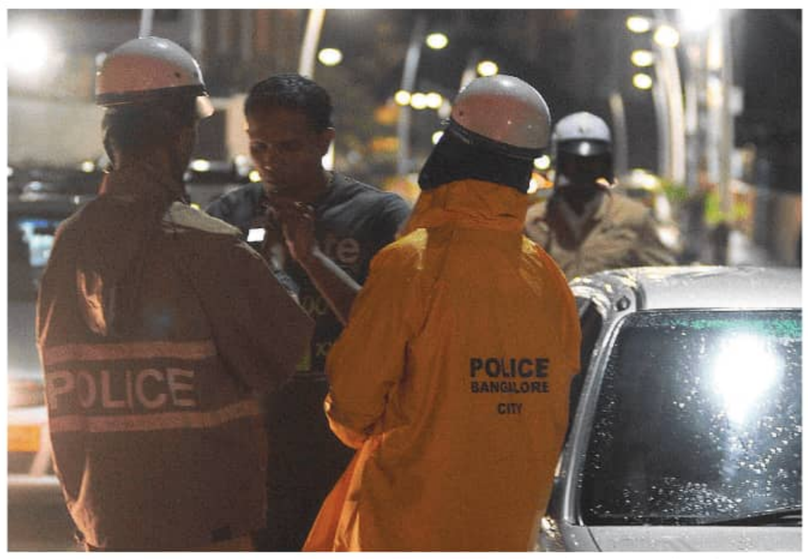
Crowded buses and bus stops, particularly along the IT corridor and during peak hours, have been identified as hotspots for mobile theft. Bike-borne snatchers also target pedestrians in other areas of the city. A police official said, "There are no hot spots, rather it is based on timings -- like these accused target women, senior citizens or individuals walking alone, or holding phones carelessly, or in low lit areas."

Officials said some recovered phones are not returned because owners do not actively follow up on their cases or provide the necessary documentation.

The data also reveals that the recovery of 55,394 mobile phones is still pending, highlighting the significant number of ongoing cases.

CRIME FILES

Man abuses cops during drunk driving check, arrested



Police check for drunken driving in the city (File photo)

The Indiranagar police have arrested a hotel manager for allegedly abusing and threatening a woman police sub-inspector during a drunk driving check near 100 Feet Road in Indiranagar during the early hours of Friday.

The accused, identified as Aditya Agarwal (29), a resident of Akshay Nagar, who hails from Bihar, reportedly objected to the officer speaking in Kannada, insisting that she communicate in Hindi and expressed anger when they spoke in Kannada. A video of the confrontation went viral on social media, showing Agarwal repeatedly shouting at the PSI, attached to the JB Nagar Traffic Police Station.

Police said he refused to cooperate or to blow into the breathalyser. Instead, he drove his car about 20 mt away and ran into a nearby pub without handing over the keys to his valet driver. Pub staff later helped police bring him out.

During the confrontation, Agarwal allegedly hurled abuses, threatened the officers, and even attempted to assault PSI Kavitha. Hoysala patrol personnel rushed to the scene and took him into custody. **–BMB**

Priest arrested for stealing gold

A priest has been arrested for allegedly stealing a 44-gram necklace from the deity on the day of Varamahalakshmi Puja.

Three days after the puja , a woman found out that gold went missing when she changed flowers during the puja. The complaint was filed by Ashok Chandaragi, alleging that Ramesh Swamy, a priest of the temple, had committed theft. Shastri had said that he would perform Varamahalakshmi Puja as well as Satyanarayana Puja and that he would stay at home for a day and continue the puja. So the couple has arranged for the priest to stay at home.

Ramesh Shastri left home the next evening after performing the puja. Later, when the flower was removed, it was found that the necklace was missing. The owner of the house lodged a complaint with the Magadi Road police station about the theft of 44 grams of necklace worth more than Rs 3 lakh. According to police officials, the priest had pawned it to a gold shop and collected Rs 2 lakh in cash, while Rs 1 lakh was transferred to his bank account. **–BMB**

Man threatening Bigg Boss House in dock

A man is under police scrutiny after posting a video on social media in which he threatened to plant a bomb in the Bigg Boss house, a clip that rapidly went viral. The accused, identified online as Ashok, who uses the handle mummy_ashok16, posted a reel in which he claimed he would "drop a bomb" on Bigg Boss 12 if certain demands were not met. The video, widely circulated, prompted concerns from social media users and led to police intervention. Kumbalgodu police, acting swiftly, registered a suo moto case and summoned Ashok to the station. **–BMB**

6 arrested for vandalism and robbery spree

The gang damaged at least 25 vehicles parked in various areas in the wee hours

Police have arrested six members of an eight-member gang that went on a vandalism and robbery spree in the early hours of Thursday in Byadarahalli, Annapoorneshwarinagar, Madanayakanahali, Doddabelavangala, and Doddaballapura Rural police station limits. The gang committed 28 offences between 12.30 am and 3.30 am, damaging vehicles and attacking motorists.

The arrested include three juveniles. Byadarahalli police arrested the six men, identified as P Jayanth (19), G Likith (18), and B Gagan alias GB (24), along with three minors.

Police said the accused damaged over 25 parked cars in Valmikinagar, Byadarahalli, and Muddinapalya. The gang also robbed three motorists on Avalahalli-Doddaballapur Road after stopping them in an auto and damaging their vehicles. Police believe the same group may be responsible for robbery cases reported in Bengaluru Rural on the same night.

"There was no clear motive for vandalising the vehicles. The accused acted under intoxication. Their criminal background is being verified," an officer said.

During questioning, one accused confessed that the violence was triggered after he was threatened by two individuals. To assert dominance, he and his associates damaged vehicles parked outside the houses of those men. **–BMB**

SOCIALTATTLE

IMAGE OF THE DAY

This X user has found just the right sticker for cars in Bengaluru. On this post: https://x.com/Masterji_UPWale/status/1971796160651440188?t=BfDfeYJzc6qDsTPOdtvYaw&s=08

Shilpa @shilpa_cn · 1d
Did you know.. BMS College of Engineering, Bengaluru, is India's first private engineering college, founded in 1946 by Late Sri B. M. Sreenivasaiah. ✨
B.M.SREENIVASAIAH
COLLEGE OF ENGINEERING

WHAT'S TWEETING

This is indeed a trip down memory lane and a general knowledge tip to boot. The X user writes: Did you know? BMS College of Engineering, Bengaluru, is India's first private engineering college, founded in 1946 by Late Sri B. M. Sreenivasaiah. https://x.com/shilpa_cn/status/1971563549152682284?t=Atd_RjhZTSCkZN2EcGX96w&s=08

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What's the point of opening a huge metro station when you are penalizing public for a 2 wheeler parking without any notice so many people are turning back just because of this stupid notice @OfficialBMRCL @ChristinMP
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Valid question here... What can metro passengers do if there is no parking at the stations? What's the point of opening a huge metro station when you are penalizing public for a 2 wheeler parking without any notice so many people are turning back just because of this stupid notice @ OfficialBMRCL @ChristinMP_

BANGALORE MIRROR MENTIONED

Our story on tree park in Yelahanka has caught this reader's attention

Vijeth Kumar @Kuma50531K... · 4d
Year-end inauguration expected for Baiyappanahalli Tree Park – Bangalore Mirror
bangaloremirror.indiatimes.com

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BENGALURU SPEAKS

and gets heard on this page

STORY BEHIND THE PHOTO

AGILE PREDATOR PATROL

Our reader shares a striking image of the Black Kite (Milvus migrans govinda), often called the pariah kite for its scavenging habits that keep surroundings clean and safe. Known for its fearless dive-bombing skill, this raptor can swiftly snatch prey from the clutches of another predator, showcasing both agility and sharp survival instincts.

The picture was clicked by reader **T Prakash**

If you have a picture and a story to share, send us the picture with your name and number at **mybangaloremirror@timesofindia.com**

Expert panel formed to ease Outer Ring Road congestion

State sets 90-day mission for traffic relief, parking reforms, pedestrian safety, and integrated transport under new expert-driven strategy

The Karnataka State Cabinet has initiated measures to ease traffic congestion on Bengaluru's Outer Ring Road (ORR) by constituting an expert committee. Headed by Greater Bengaluru Authority (GBA) Chief Commissioner and B-SMILE Technical Director B.S. Prahlad, with urban experts RK Misra and Naresh Narasimhan, the panel has been tasked with preparing a detailed project report (DPR). The decision was taken at a high-level meeting chaired by Chief Secretary Dr Shalini Rajneesh, attended by officials across departments.

A Cabinet-backed committee of top officials and urban experts will craft a DPR, streamline utilities, enforce parking rules, repair potholes, and boost public transport to tackle ORR's chronic traffic chaos

The Urban Development Department has been directed to submit a proposal by October 15 for inviting tenders for the DPR. The committee will examine existing studies by the Directorate of Urban Land Transport (DULT), conduct joint inspections, and assess utility relocations obstructing road expansion. Recommendations such as carpooling and FASTag-based traffic management will also be considered.

Authorities also discussed the rapid rise in vehicle numbers, which have reached 1.2 crore. To address parking issues, 1,194 km of roads have been marked as no-parking zones, while regulated parking areas are to be created through tenders. Monthly passes, towing vehicles, and private lots will support enforcement.

Garbage dumping and civic nuisances were flagged as persistent problems. More surveillance cameras will be deployed, empowering police to fine offenders and strengthen coordination between civic agencies.

A separate committee focusing on public transport integration was cleared, comprising the GBA Chief Commissioner, Urban Development Secretary, and BMRCL Managing Director. The panel will work on first- and last-mile connectivity, integrating BMTC and BMRCL data with the "Namma Yatri" app, and deploying smaller buses in underserved areas.

Pedestrian facilities will see improvements with a new footpath policy, brushed-concrete pavements, and 78 skywalks under PPP models. Pothole repairs will be tracked through a live dashboard, with strict deadlines and penalties for delays. The government also launched a 90-day action plan, "Mission Mukta Sanchaara," targeting 1,600 km of roads and 75 junctions, with feasibility studies for double-decker flyovers.

— BMB

Pedestrian policy pushes low-cost concrete-brushed footpaths, 78 skywalks under PPP model, dustbins, and removal of unauthorised OFC cables for safer walking.

DID YOU KNOW?

Astronomers using the Hubble Space Telescope have observed a white dwarf–a highly compact stellar ember–that appears to have gobbled up an icy world akin to the dwarf planet Pluto, a finding with implications regarding the likelihood of habitable planets beyond our solar system. The white dwarf is located in our Milky Way galaxy about 255 light-years from Earth, relatively close in cosmic terms, and has a mass about 57% that of the sun. A light-year is the distance light travels in a year, 5.9 trillion miles (9.5 trillion km). White dwarfs are among the universe's most compact objects, though not as dense as black holes. Stars with up to eight times the mass of the sun appear destined to end up as a white dwarf. They eventually burn up all the hydrogen they use as fuel. Gravity then causes them to collapse and blow off their outer layers in a "red giant" stage, eventually leaving behind a compact core–the white dwarf. The sun appears fated to end its existence as a white dwarf, billions of years from now. The white dwarf in the new study is a remnant of a star estimated to have been 50% more massive than the sun. — Reuters

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9591233247
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Erika Kirk knew Trump long before she met Charlie? Romania charity allegations set internet ablaze

Claim: After Charlie Kirk's assassination, viral posts alleged Erika Kirk was secretly tied to Mossad, Donald Trump, and Jeffrey Epstein. Online rumours claimed her Romanian Angels charity masked trafficking, and she was banned from Romania—claims debunked but still circulating widely.
The Fact: Erika Kirk, widow of Charlie Kirk, previously ran a nonprofit program called Romanian Angels, supporting children in Constanța, Romania. Fact-check reports confirm no verified evidence links her to trafficking, intelligence operations, or a Romanian government ban.

Erika Kirk, widow of Charlie Kirk, is facing a wave of online rumours linking her to intelligence operations, child trafficking, and political circles, following her husband's assassination. Claims surfaced regarding her Romanian charity, Romanian Angels, and a supposed ban from Romania. However, fact-check reports have debunked these allegations. Other wild theories have also emerged online, attempting to connect Erika Kirk to former US President Donald Trump.

The rumours began after a viral social media thread alleged that Erika was involved in covert intelligence work, child trafficking networks, and international politics. Following Charlie Kirk's killing at a Utah college event, unverified claims circulated suggesting that Erika had been banned from Romania due to her nonprofit's alleged involvement in trafficking. Before joining Turning Point USA, an organization founded by her late husband, Erika ran a nonprofit called Every Day Heroes Like You, which operated a program known as Romanian Angels in Constanța, Romania. The initiative focused on charity drives, such as organizing a Christmas Wishlist for local children.

Despite online claims, there is no verified evidence that Erika was ever banned from Romania. Neither Romanian authorities nor US officials have confirmed any wrongdoing by her charity.

Erika Kirk–Trump connection

Speculation intensified after Donald Trump was photographed consoling Erika Kirk at Charlie's memorial service. Some users circulated bikini photos of Erika from her pageant days, linking her to Trump. Their association dates back to 2012, when Erika represented Arizona in the Miss USA pageant, which Trump co-owned at the time. At the memorial, Erika, visibly emotional, was pictured making an "I love you" hand gesture toward the sky while Trump stood beside her, placing his arm around her shoulders. In another image, Trump appeared to smile while she wept in his arms, fuelling further speculation online.

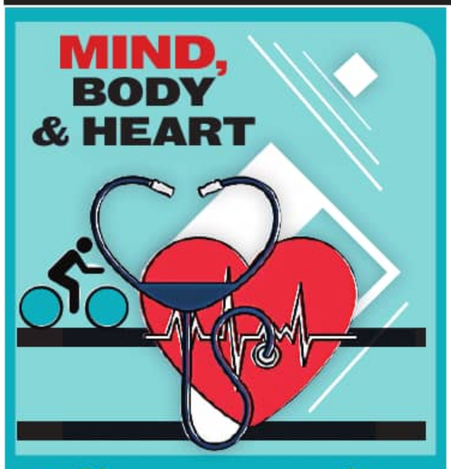
According to LadBible, Erika competed in the 2012 Miss USA competition after winning Miss Arizona USA. During the pageant, she performed a basketball-dribbling routine as her talent segment. At that time, Trump co-owned the Miss Universe Organization, which oversaw Miss Universe, Miss USA, and Miss Teen USA between 1996 and 2015. Online claims also suggested Erika worked as a casting director linked to Trump's companies, though no official records confirm her involvement with his organization. Her personal website reportedly still lists contact information for modelling and acting inquiries.

Personal life

Erika began dating Charlie Kirk in 2019. The couple got engaged in December 2020 and married in May 2021. They welcomed their first child, a daughter, in August 2022, followed by a son in May 2024. While online speculation continues, fact-checkers emphasize that the claims tying Erika Kirk to child trafficking, intelligence agencies or Romain lack evidence. — ET Online

HEALTH TIP: Drinking 1-2 glasses of water right after waking up is like giving your body a gentle wake-up call

Fruits like watermelon, oranges, cucumbers, and pineapple are packed with water, making them a delicious way to stay refreshed



All you need to know about...

Coping with thoughts

Mindful Breathing
When you are lost in your thoughts thinking about your past and future or things that make you overwhelmed, practising mindful breathing will be one of the best ways to bring yourself to the moment. Take a pause, inhale slowly through your nose, filling your lungs completely, and then exhale gently through your mouth. Notice the rhythm of your breath and the rise and fall of your chest.

Journaling
Write down your feelings like having an honest conversation with yourself, without the fear of being judged or misunderstood. When you write your thoughts and feelings down on the page, you might feel lighter later. Journaling will help you spot patterns.

Reframe Negative Thoughts
This doesn't mean you should ignore your thoughts and feelings or pretend that everything is perfect. Instead of giving yourself negative self-talk and doubting yourself, be more realistic and be kind to yourself. Instead of thinking lowly of yourself, shift to a simple positive word that 'you can.'

Limit Overthinking
Overthinking will make you exhausted and get emotionally drained. Practise a way to manage this by creating a specific intentional time each day when you allow yourself to fully acknowledge your worries and stressful thoughts. Set aside 10-15 minutes in the evening.

Physically Active
Moving your body by being physically active can be one of the most effective ways to lift your mood. It's not about fitness, it's a way to regulate your emotions. When you exercise, your brain releases endorphins, which will help reduce stress and improve your overall sense of well-being. A simple walk or run can help you shift your mood.

-Femina

Celebrations on your plate

Must-try recipes to get into festive mood

MAKHANA KHEER

INGREDIENTS:
- Makhana: 2 cups
- Milk: 1 ltr, boiled
- Sugar: 1/4 cup
- Almond: 1 tbsp finely chopped
- Cashew: 1 tbsp, finely chopped
- Raisins: 1 tbsp
- Cardamom Powder: 1/2 tsp
- Ghee: 2 tsp

METHOD:
- Heat 1 tsp ghee in a pan. Add chopped almonds and cashews, roasting them until they turn light golden. Then, add raisins and sauté until they puff up slightly. Remove everything onto a plate and set aside.
- In the same pan, heat 1 tsp ghee and add 2 cups of makhana. Roast for 2-3 minutes. Take out 1 ½ cups of the roasted makhana and grind them coarsely. Keep the remaining ½ cup whole.
- Pour 2 cups of milk into the pan and bring it to a boil. Add the whole roasted makhana first, followed by the coarsely ground makhana. Let it simmer for 5 minutes.
- Stir in sugar and crushed green cardamoms. Cook for another 2-3 minutes until the kheer thickens.
- Add the roasted dry fruits back in, let it simmer for a couple more minutes, and your kheer is ready.
- Garnish with extra dry fruits and serve warm or chilled.

BENGALI STYLE CHOLAR DAL

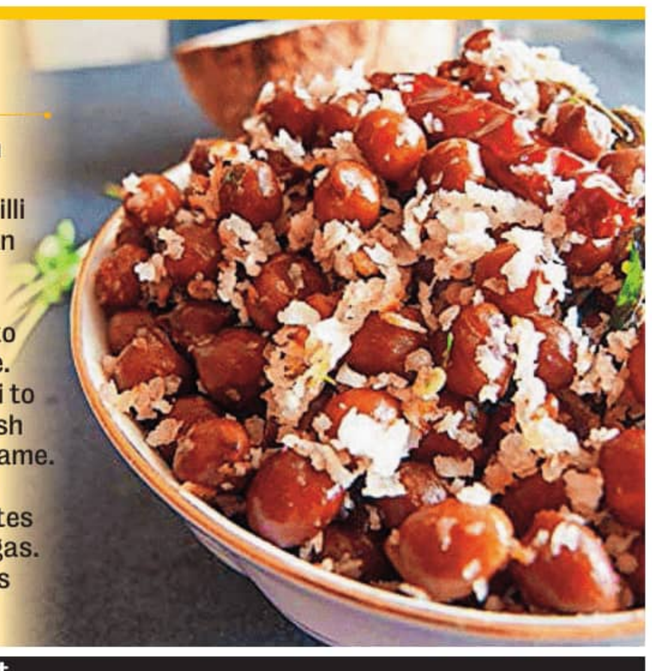
INGREDIENTS:
- Chana Dal: 1 cup, soaked and washed
- Coconut: 1 tbsp, chopped
- Coconut: 1 tbsp, thinly sliced
- Raisins: 1 tbsp optional
- Green Cardamom: 3
- Cinnamon Stick: 2 inch
- Bay Leaves: 2 to 3
- Ginger: 2 tsp, grated
- Green Chilli: 2-3 slit
- Cumin Seeds: 2 tsp
- Dry whole red chilli: 2-3
- Turmeric Powder: 1 tsp
- Mustard Oil: ½ tbsp
- Ghee: ½ tbsp
- Sugar: 1 tsp
- Salt: to taste

METHOD:
- Add dal, some salt and turmeric water to a pressure cooker and cook the dal until it gets soaked. Ensure that the dal does not become mushy.
- Heat oil in a pan and shallow fry the coconut slices and chopped coconut until golden brown. Drain this and keep it aside.
- In the same pan, add ghee and the remaining mustard oil. Add crushed cinnamon and cardamom to this.
- Once you get a nice aroma, add the bay leaf, cumin seeds and whole dry red chillies and let it splatter.
- Add grated ginger and green chillies to the mix. Saute the same and slowly pour the dal to this.
- Simmer the dal on low flame for about 10 minutes, while stirring in between.
- Add raisins to the dal, sprinkle salt and sugar.
- Add fried coconut in the end and give it a nice mix.
- Serve this hot with Bengali puri, kachori, rice or Luchi.

KALA CHANA SUNDAL

INGREDIENTS:
- Black Chickpeas: 1 cup
- Black Mustard Seeds: 1/2 tsp, deseeded
- Split Urad Dal: 1/2 tsp
- Green Chilli: 3
- Dry Red Chilli: 2
- Asafoetida: 2 pinch
- Coconut: 6 tbsp, freshly grated
- Curry Leaves spring: 1
- Coconut Oil: 2 tbsp
- Coriander Leaves: 2 tbsp, finely chopped
- Salt: to taste
- Water: as needed

METHOD:
- Soak the channa overnight or for 5 to 6 hours. Rinse the channa and drain the water.
- Pressure cook the channa by adding enough water and salt to it. Leave it in the cooker until it cools down.
- Drain the cooked channa and keep it aside.
- Now heat oil in a pan and add mustard seeds to it.
- When the seeds begin to crackle, add urad dal to the pan as well and saute it until it becomes a light brown color.
- Add curry leaves, red chilli and asafoetida to the pan as well and fry for 10-15 seconds.
- Add the cooked channa to the pan and salt to taste.
- Add smashed green chilli to the mix and saute the dish for 4-5 minutes on low flame.
- Add grated coconut and saute for 1-2 more minutes and then switch off the gas.
- Your kala chana sundal is ready to serve hot!



Recipes from The Tastes of India Audible India podcast

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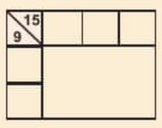
SOLVE IT IN A MINUTE

$\sqrt{80} + \sqrt{x} - 10\sqrt{5} = -\sqrt{5}$

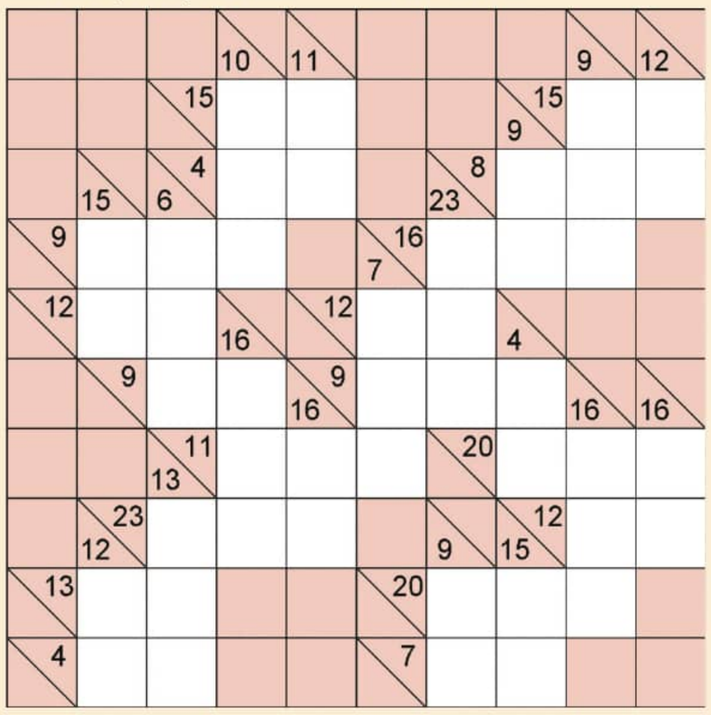
$x = ?$

Kakuro

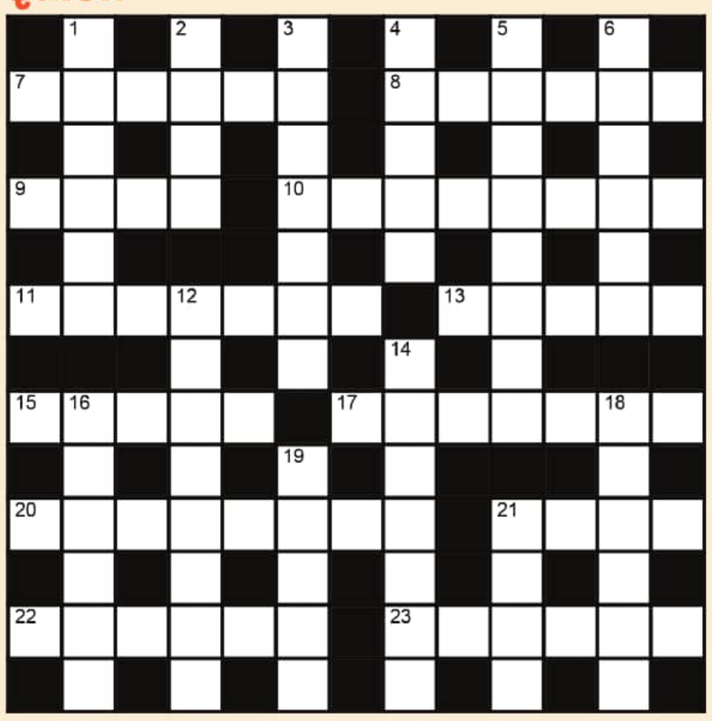
The numbers in the grey squares refer to the sums of the digits that you must fill into the empty spaces directly below or to the right of the grey square containing the number. For instance, in the given example, the 3 boxes horizontally next to 15 must contain 3 digits that add up to 15, whereas for 9, it is the 2 boxes placed vertically under it that must add up to 9. No zeros are used here, only the digits 1 through 9.



Note: A digit cannot appear more than once in any particular digit combination. For instance, in the example, we cannot have the combination of 4+7+4 for 15.



Quick



ACROSS

7 Solidified lava (6)
8 Sausage in a roll (3,3)
9 Advise against (4)
10 Balcony (8)
11 Tie the knot again (7)
13 Amongst our ___ : in our company today...? (5)
15 Waned or receded (5)
17 Ended telephonic conversation? (4,3)
20 Route that might save you time (5-3)
21 One pound sterling (4)
22 Dive (6)
23 Pivot (6)

DOWN

1 Glacial period (3,3)
2 Author Hubbard (1,3)
3 Vary cue anagram for a South Indian river (7)
4 At what place ? (5)
5 Smarting (8)
6 Initial tries, marauding expeditions (6)
12 Declaring or asserting (8)
14 Christening (7)
16 Look here! (6)
18 Weakened or gave out (6)
19 Group of eight (5)
21 Wisecrack (4)

Quoteuncode

This puzzle is a substitution cipher in which one letter stands for another. If you think that Q equals C, it will equal C throughout the puzzle. Single letters, short words and words using an apostrophe give you clues to locating vowels. Solution is by trial and error.

Today's CLUE: W EQUALS G

YSDUZAPFXR-ZKYERIFDW ZUNYFRREO FD ISZRE SDO PERUPDEO SR MEFZUPE.

Linemaro

This morning I saw a beautiful flower, and thought of you

Mindchow

Youth is happy because it has the ability to see beauty. Anyone who keeps the ability to see beauty never grows old

Joke of the day

Signboard in a Bangkok dry cleaners: Drop your trouser

Loop

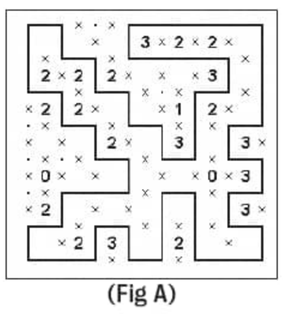
Rules

» Connect adjacent dots with vertical or horizontal lines, creating a single loop (Fig A). » Crossovers or branches are not allowed (As shown by dotted lines in Fig B). » Numbers in the puzzle indicate the number of lines that should surround it, while empty cells may be surrounded by any number of lines. » You can't draw lines around zeros. » Each puzzle has just one unique solution.

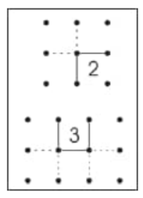
How to begin:

Example (Fig A) – Begin with the zero next to 3. Since no lines can be drawn around zero, mark crosses around it, as shown. Now there is a cross in one space around 3. So we know the three lines of 3 can only be drawn in the remaining three spaces. Next, these lines can only be extended in one direction each. Continue, using the same logic.

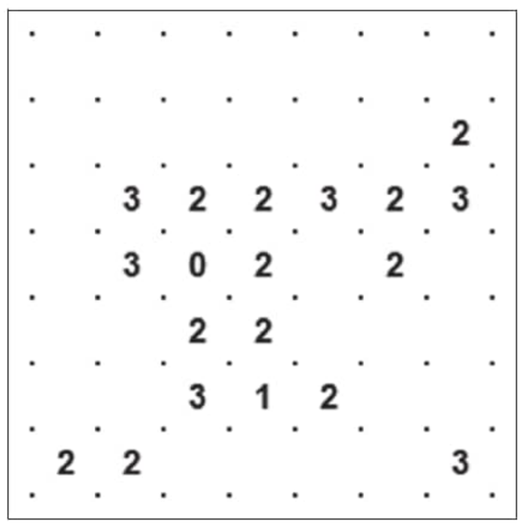
Hints: Keep eliminating possibilities by marking crosses in spaces between dots where a line isn't possible, i.e., if you have already completed required lines or where a line extension may create a branch or cause a dead-end (Fig B)



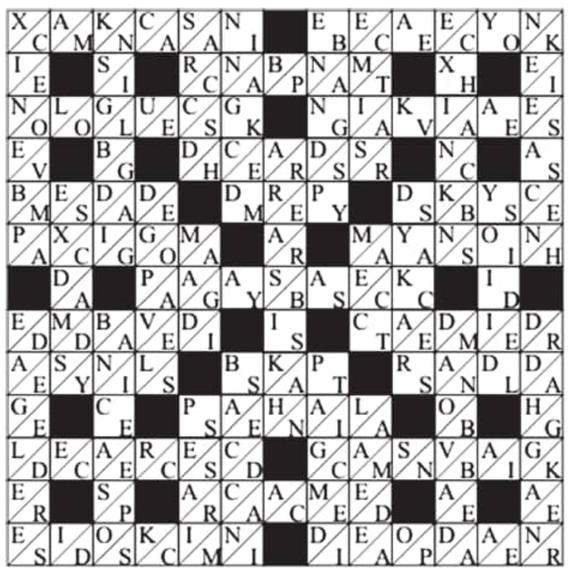
(Fig A)



(Fig B) Not Allowed



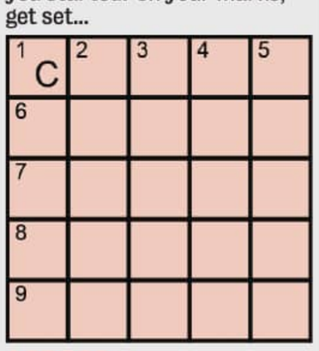
Strikeout



This crossword has no clues and the answer is there waiting for you. All you have to do is find it in each square. You have a choice of two letters, one of which you must strike out. If you choose correctly, you will be left with a grid that contains real words.

Fast five

How long do you think it will take you to unscramble the ten words shown below and fit them correctly into the grid in the order given one letter has already been entered to get you started? on your marks, get set...



ACROSS

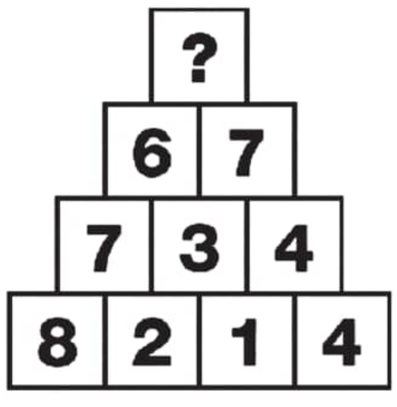
1 CF Art; 6 Road I; 7 Me tun; 8 Ament; 9 Den by

DOWN

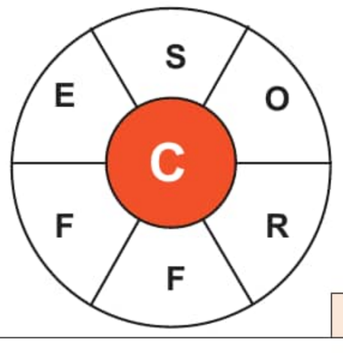
1 Mr Cub; 2 An ere; 3 Manda (2-3); 4 In Fed; 5 TT toy

Mensapuzzle

Which number replaces the question mark and completes the puzzle?



Bull's eye



How many words of four or more letters can you make from the letters shown? Every word must contain the central letter. There should be one seven-letter word. British English Dictionary is used as a reference.

04 Average; 05 Good; 07 Outstanding

SudokuChallenge

8	5						7	2
	9			3		1		
1			6	7				
			4	2	1		9	
4								7
	6		7	8	9			
				4	5			6
		3		9			5	
5	2						4	8

To solve a Sudoku puzzle, every digit from one to nine must appear in each of the nine vertical columns, in each of the nine horizontal rows and in each of the nine boxes.

Gofigure

Place the four numbers in the first, third, fifth, and seventh boxes and whatever operators you care to use in the second, fourth, and sixth boxes in the correct order to get the answer. Use the numbers only once.

Easy = 1

2 3 7 7

Medium = 22

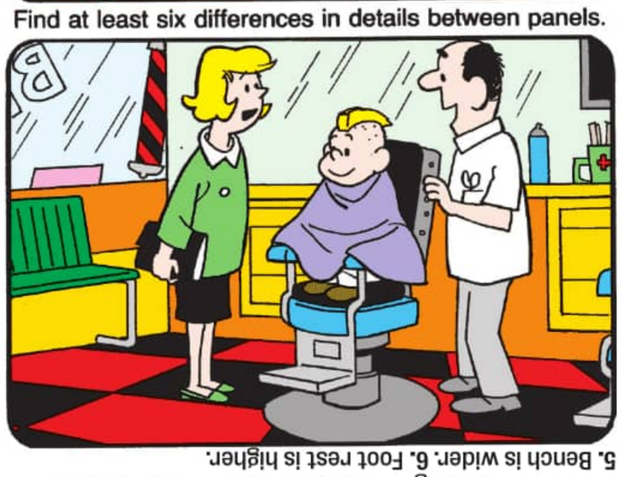
1 6 8 9

Hard = 56

5 6 7 9

Hocusfocus

Find at least six differences in details between panels.



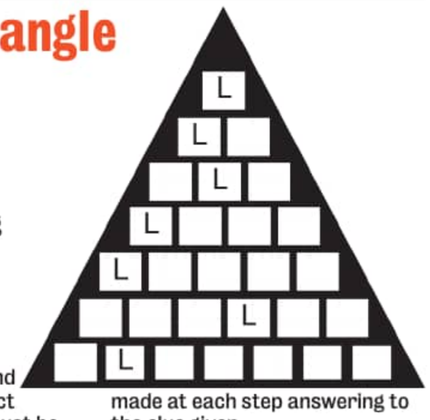
Differences: 1. Barber's shirt is shorter. 2. Woman's arm is not showing. 3. Button is lower. 4. Can is moved. 5. Bench is wider. 6. Foot rest is higher.

Riddler

Fill in the blanks to create four English phrases, where all of the words in the blanks are anagrams of one another. ____ up Copy ___ ____ pool Balanced ___

Alpha triangle

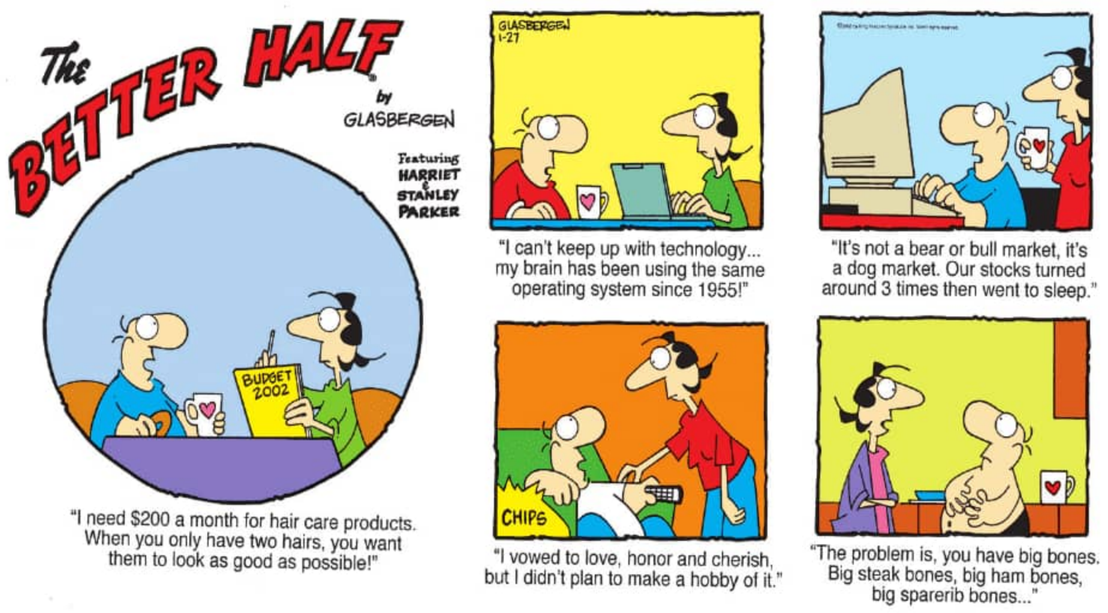
1 Learner's plate
2 ____Boheme
3 English beer
4 Body of water
5 Potato pancake
6 Leg jewellery
7 A warm covering

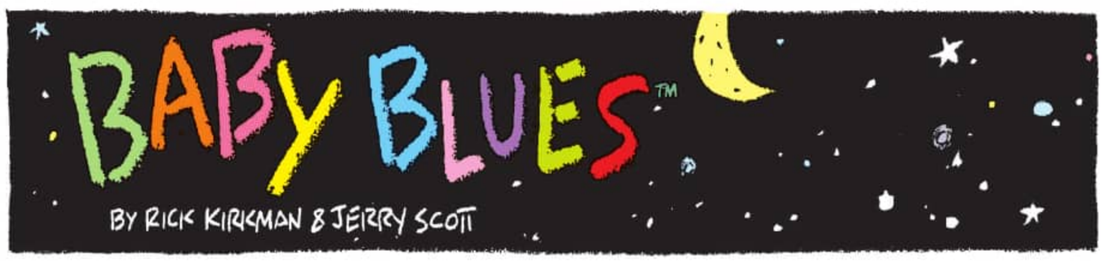


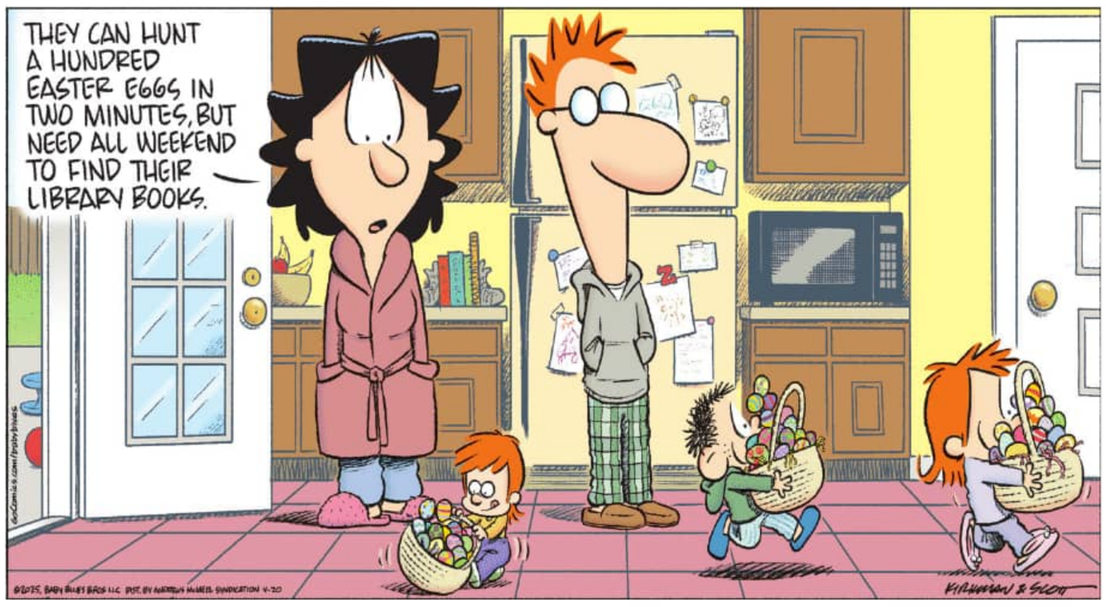
Beginning at the top move towards the bottom seven-letter word by adding a letter at each step and rearranging. A correct and different word must be made at each step answering to the clue given.

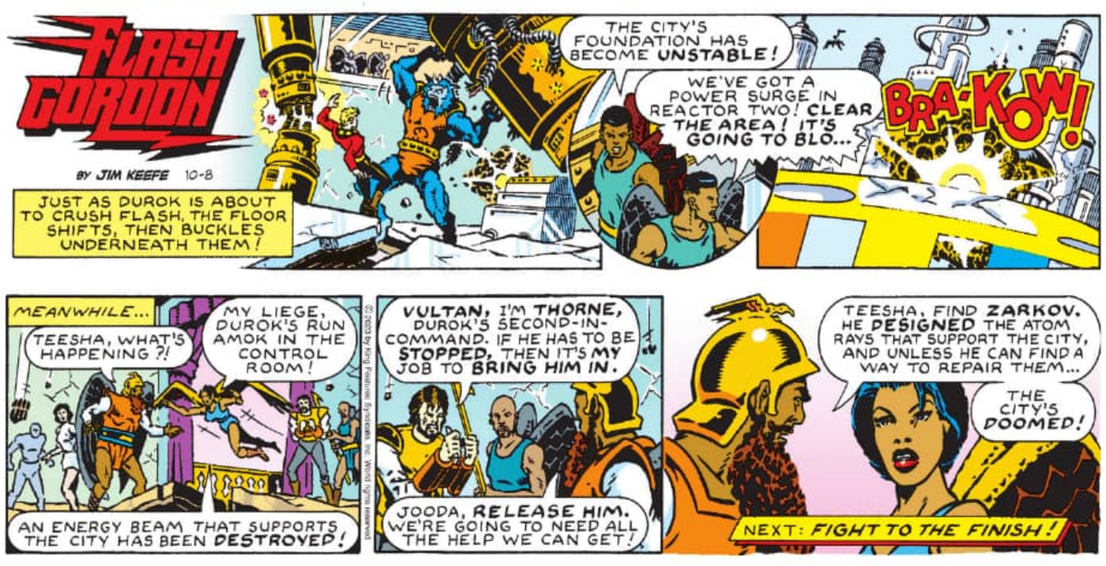
DIFFICULT TO SOLVE? FIND THESE SOLUTIONS ON THE NEXT PAGE

COMICS


The BETTER HALF
by GLASBERGEN
Featuring HARRIET & STANLEY PARKER
BUDGET 2002
"I need $200 a month for hair care products. When you only have two hairs, you want them to look as good as possible!"
GLASBERGEN 1-27
"I can't keep up with technology... my brain has been using the same operating system since 1955!"
"It's not a bear or bull market, it's a dog market. Our stocks turned around 3 times then went to sleep."
CHIPS
"I vowed to love, honor and cherish, but I didn't plan to make a hobby of it."
"The problem is, you have big bones. Big steak bones, big ham bones, big spareribs bones..."






FLASH GORDON
BY JIM KEEFE 10-8
THE CITY'S FOUNDATION HAS BECOME UNSTABLE!
WE'VE GOT A POWER SURGE IN REACTOR TWO! CLEAR THE AREA! IT'S GOING TO BLO...
BRA-KOW!
JUST AS DUROK IS ABOUT TO CRUSH FLASH, THE FLOOR SHIFTS, THEN BUCKLES UNDERNEATH THEM!
MEANWHILE...
TEESHA, WHAT'S HAPPENING?!
MY LIEGE, DUROK'S RUN AMOK IN THE CONTROL ROOM!
AN ENERGY BEAM THAT SUPPORTS THE CITY HAS BEEN DESTROYED!
VULTAN, I'M THORNE, DUROK'S SECOND-IN-COMMAND. IF HE HAS TO BE STOPPED, THEN IT'S MY JOB TO BRING HIM IN.
JOODA, RELEASE HIM. WE'RE GOING TO NEED ALL THE HELP WE CAN GET!
TEESHA, FIND ZARKOV. HE DESIGNED THE ATOM RAYS THAT SUPPORT THE CITY, AND UNLESS HE CAN FIND A WAY TO REPAIR THEM...
THE CITY'S DOOMED!
NEXT: FIGHT TO THE FINISH!

WRITTEN IN THE STARS

DR SUNDEEP KOCHAR

If it's your birthday today

Today begins a hopeful chapter. Finances stabilize with steady saving habits. Career recognition grows through dedication and hard work. Love becomes more fulfilling as you share your dreams openly. Luck smiles on travel and exploration. Tip: Trust the process, patience and faith in your journey will bring peace and ensure that progress unfolds at the right time.

Aries Mar 21 – Apr 20
Action leads to breakthroughs. Seize opportunities without hesitation, trusting your instincts to guide you. This courage attracts support, ensuring meaningful progress in both your personal aspirations and professional goals today.

Taurus Apr 21 – May 20
Ground yourself through comforting routines, enjoy nature, cook a favorite meal, or rest. These simple acts replenish your energy, helping you face upcoming responsibilities with emotional stability and renewed strength.

Gemini May 21 – Jun 21
Share your creative ideas confidently, conversations spark collaborations that bring them to life. These connections inspire fresh opportunities, moving you closer to your personal and professional dreams with excitement and purpose.

Cancer Jun 22 – July 23
Emotional honesty nurtures harmony. Speak openly about your feelings, creating space for deeper trust and understanding. These heartfelt exchanges strengthen relationships, leaving you feeling valued and supported by those who care.

Leo Jul 24 – Aug 23
Recognition boosts your confidence, embrace it as motivation to pursue greater challenges. Your charisma continues to inspire others, attracting opportunities that align perfectly with your long-term goals and creative vision.

Virgo Aug 24 – Sep 23
Simplify your workload, prioritize tasks that matter most. This focus restores balance, helping you accomplish more with less stress and creating time for meaningful reflection and personal growth.

Libra Sep 24 – Oct 22
Appreciation brings joy, show gratitude through words or thoughtful actions. These small gestures foster harmony and deepen emotional connections, enriching your relationships with warmth and genuine affection.

Scorpio Oct 23 – Nov 22
Embrace change with courage. Transformations in your personal or professional life align you with growth and purpose. Trust these shifts, they are guiding you toward a brighter, more fulfilling future.

Sagittarius Nov 23 – Dec 22
Seek out experiences that ignite your passion, travel, learning, or creative pursuits. These adventures broaden your perspective, fueling your enthusiasm for growth and new opportunities ahead.

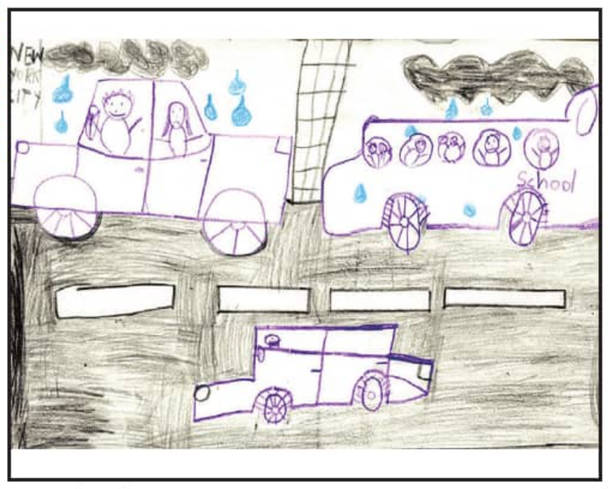
Capricorn Dec 23 – Jan 20
Persistence brings results, stay focused on your long-term objectives. Each disciplined step you take builds the strong foundation needed to achieve the success you've been working so diligently to create.

Aquarius Jan 21 – Feb 19
Collaborations flourish, share your innovative ideas with partners who complement your strengths. These joint efforts turn visions into practical achievements, driving meaningful progress for everyone involved.

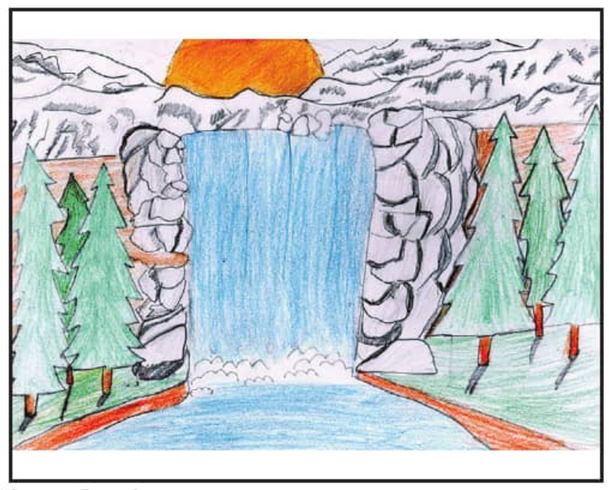
Pisces Feb 20 – Mar 20
Reflect quietly to find peace, meditation or journaling brings emotional clarity. This stillness deepens your connection with yourself, helping you make thoughtful, heart-centered decisions for the future.

www.sundeepkochar.com

KIDZONE



Aarya, Bengaluru


Ananya, Bengaluru

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Please send hard copies of your artwork in A4 size only.

SOLUTIONS

SOLVE IN 1M
√(16^5) + √x − 10√5 = −√5
4√5 + √x = 9√5
√x = 5√5
x= 5^3 = 125

BULL'S EYE
coffee, core, force, fresco, scoff, SCOFFER, score

RIDDLER
Tied up, Copy edit, Tide pool, Balanced diet.

FAST FIVE

C	R	A	F	T
R	A	D	I	O
U	N	M	E	T
M	E	A	N	T
B	E	N	D	Y

STRIKE OUT

C	A	N	C	A	N		B	E	A	C	O	N		
I		I		R	A	B	A	T		H		I		
N	O	L	U	C	K		N	A	V	I		E	S	
E		G		H	E	A	D	S		C		S		
M	E	A	D		D	R	Y		S	K	Y	E		
A		P	A	Y	B	A	C	K		D				
A	X	I	O	M		A		M	A	S	O	N		
S	I	S	K	I	N		D	E	O	D	A	R		
E		P		R	A	C	E	D		E		E		
L	E	E	R	E	D		G	A	S	B	A	G		
G		C		P	E	N	A	L		B		G		
A	S	I	S		S	A	P		S	A	L	A		
E	M	B	E	D		I		C	E	D	E	D		
A		P	A	Y	B	A	C	K		D				
A	X	I	O	M		A		M	A	S	O	N		
M	E	A	D		D	R	Y		S	K	Y	E		
E		G		H	E	A	D	S		C		S		
N	O	L	U	C	K		N	A	V	I		E	S	
I		I		R	A	B	A	T		H		I		
C	A	N	C	A	N		B	E	A	C	O	N		

QUICK

								D		G		T		
								P	L	U	N	G	E	
								O		I		T		
							S	H	O	R	T	C	U	T
							E	B	B	E	D		R	
							R	E	M	A	R	K		
								G		E				
							W	A	R	N		V	E	R
							S	C	O	R	I		A	
								I		L		C		W

MENSA PUZZLE
12. Working from the bottom row to the apex of the triangle, the sum of the values in each row follows the sequence 15, 14, 13,12.

QUOTE UNCODE
Manuscript – something submitted in haste and returned at leisure.

SUDOKU

8	5	6	9	1	4	3	7	2
7	9	2	5	3	8	1	6	4
1	3	4	6	7	2	5	8	9
3	7	8	4	2	1	6	9	5
4	1	9	3	5	6	8	2	7
2	6	5	7	8	9	4	1	3
9	8	1	2	4	5	7	3	6
6	4	3	8	9	7	2	5	1
5	2	7	1	6	3	9	4	8

ALPHA TRIANGLE
L, La, Ale, Lake, Latke, Anklet, Blanket.

GO FIGURE
Easy
3 – 2 – 7 + 7 = 1
Medium
6 + 8 + 9 – 1 = 22
Hard
9 x 6 – 5 + 7 = 56

LOOP

KAKURO

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Next chapter
Malayalam actor Tovino Thomas, best known for his roles in projects such as 'Minnal Murali', '2018', is set to headline 'Lokah Chapter 2'

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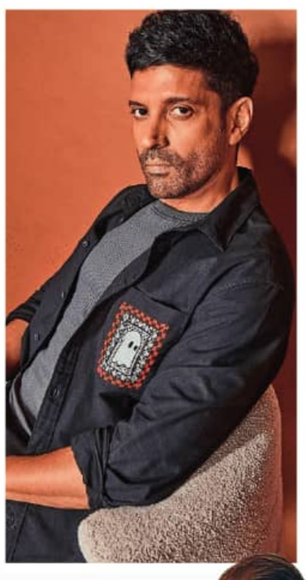
Star singers

Bollywood stars proving they can hold a tune too

Alia Bhatt

Alia Bhatt surprised fans with her soulful voice in Samjhawan Unplugged. Beyond acting brilliance, she showcased control, emotion, and tonal clarity. This performance highlighted her versatility and proved her artistry extended well past screen roles into music.

Farhan Akhtar



Farhan Akhtar brought raw energy with Rock On!! where his vocals elevated the film's cult status. His live performances with his band further reinforced his powerful presence. Acting, writing, directing, and singing together reflect his multidimensional talent that resonates deeply with audiences.

Shraddha Kapoor

Shraddha Kapoor surprised listeners when she lent her voice to Galliyan Returns and Sab Tera. With her gentle tone and expressive delivery, she strengthened emotional depth in her performances. Singing became another dimension of her creativity, bridging her onscreen emotions with her musical identity.

–ETimes

Ayushmann Khurrana

Ayushmann Khurrana blends acting and singing seamlessly, debuting musically with Pani Da Rang. His distinctive voice gained instant admiration. Regularly performing his own songs, he stands as one of Bollywood's strongest examples of actor-singers balancing both crafts with effortless charm and credibility.

Priyanka Chopra

Priyanka Chopra expanded beyond Bollywood by entering the international music industry with singles like In My City. Her collaborations with global artists marked her crossover as an actor-singer. Her venture exemplifies how Bollywood stars can pursue successful music careers internationally alongside acting.

BEST FRIEND'S WEDDING

The wedding preparations for Selena Gomez and Benny Blanco appear to be taking shape, and things are just getting bigger.

The celebrity couple is reportedly set to get married over the weekend in California, months after Blanco popped the question. As fans eagerly await seeing their beloved singer in a pretty bridal gown, Selena's best friend, pop icon Taylor Swift, has already arrived in California.

According to TMZ, Swift reached the Santa Barbara airport on Friday afternoon; however, she remained completely undercover with heavy security. Even though the singer has arrived for the weekend celebrations, she is likely to stay at a private rental home instead of a hotel due to security reasons.

"She will be renting a house near the wedding venue, which is a secret to the public. Her security team feels it's better than a hotel," a source told Page Six.

When Selena announced her engagement, Taylor Swift was among the most excited ones. "Yes, I will be the flower girl," she commented on the post.

It is yet to be known if Swift's NFL star fiance, Travis Kelce, will arrive for the wedding.

Selena Gomez and Benny Blanco are believed to be getting married in an intimate two-celebration in Montecito, California. The wedding is expected to draw a star-studded guest list, including the singer-actor's co-stars Steve Martin and Martin Short. Some of Blanco's heavyweight music collaborators are also expected.

Selena celebrated her bachelorette party in Cabo San Lucas, with friends Raquelle Stevens, Ashley Cook and Courtney Lopez, among others.

In an Instagram post, she shared several pictures of herself in "Bride" theme outfits, with one of them showing her in a veil with the embroidery of "bride to be." The singer was also pictured relaxing on a luxury yacht, surrounded by friends, as they posed for pictures and shared fun moments.

–ANI

Suspense thriller with many twists

KUNTE BILLE (KANNADA)
2.5 RATING ★★½☆☆
- **DIRECTOR** Siddegowda GBS
- **ACTORS** Yadu Balaji, Meghashree, Suchendra Prasad, Bhavani Prakash, Sudha Belawadi, Kavya, Siddegowda, and Bala Rajwadi.
- **Duration** 124 minutes
- **Certification** UA

Director Siddegowda, known for the movies Hoovina Haara and Daksha Yagna and for writing the story and screenplay for Tarle Village, has attempted to convey a message through Kunte Bille (Hopscotch) on the importance of bonding between parents and children and how excessive obsession with caste and creed ruins the lives of innocent people. The screenplay of the film is praiseworthy. The director has opted for a non-linear method to tell the story and succeeded to some extent in keeping audiences hooked, especially during the post-intermission session. Siddegowda also plays a key character in the movie.

The movie begins with a person carrying 'dead chickens' in a gunny bag on a rainy night. He is assigned to bury the bag in a pit near a poultry farm. At this juncture, the director narrates the story of the person. We see a mother (Bhavani Prakash) and father (Shankar Ashwath) complaining to the police about their missing daughter Chandana (Meghashree). The director narrates how Chamaraju aka Chamu (Yadu Balaji), who works at a poultry farm owned by Giddappa (Bala Rajwadi), tries to avoid his childhood friend Chandana and how he finally falls in love with her. She insists on marrying him but he advises her to get her parents' permission.

Meanwhile, police inspector (Suchendra Prasad) summons Chamaraju to the police station and asks him about the whereabouts of Chandana. You have to watch the movie to know what happened to Chandana and who is behind this.

Yadu Balaji has made a good attempt to prove his mettle as an actor, but he has a far way to go if he wishes to continue acting in movies. Meghashree has nothing to do in the movie except appearing in a few scenes. Veteran actor Suchendra Prasad is at his best. He is convincing as a police officer. Bhavani Prakash and Sudha Belawadi provide good support. Kavya, as a sub-inspector, looks good and has also acted well. The director could have avoided the last song because it looks like an impediment to the narration of the story.

It is worth a watch for those craving suspense thrillers. **–Y Maheswara Reddy**